JOURNAL OF THE
AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

Vol. XI JUNE, 1923 Number 6

The Autobiography of An Idea

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CHAPTER XIII.

The Garden City

THERE was a time a city some three hundred thousand strong stood beside the shore of a great and very wonderful lake with a wonderful horizon and wonderful daily moods. Above the rim of its horizon rose sun and moon in their times, the one spreading o'er its surface a glory of rubies; its companion, at the full, an entrancing sheen of mottled silver. At other times far to the west in the after-glow of sunset the delicate bright crescent poised in farewell slowly dimmed and passed from sight. Around this city, in ever-extending areas, in fancied semi-circles, lay a beauteous prairie, born companion of the lake; while within this prairie, at distances of some seven to twelve miles from the center of the Garden City, were dotted villages, forming also an open-spaced semi-circle, for each village nestled in the spacious prairie, and within its own companionable tree growth. To the north and west of the city there grew in abundance lofty elms and oaks; to the south the section-line dirt roads were double rowed with huge willows all swayed toward the northeast as the summer winds year by year had set them when sap was flowing strong; while scattered through this tract were ancient cottonwoods rising singly or in groups, in their immense and venerable strength. Further to the south, where the soil becomes sandy, there appeared fantastic dwarf pines and scrub oaks, while at the Lake Shore, neighboring them, stretched a mile or more of heavy oak groves that might be called a forest. Within it were winding trails; within it one seemed lost to the world.

The city itself was more than a large village—it was a village grown robust with an impelling purpose. In and near its central business district, residences held their own, and churches sent up their spires on Court House Square. There were few tramways. Horse-and-buggy was the unit; and on the Grand Boulevard fine victorias, blooded high-steppers noisily caparisoned in shining brass, liveried driver and footman, were daily on view to the populace—wealth was growing breathlessly. The business section passed insensibly into the residential, then began tree growth and gardens—the city bloomed in its season. In winter was the old time animation which came with heavy, lasting snows, with cutters, jangling bells, and horses of all shades and grades, and the added confusion of racing; for everybody who was anybody owned at least one horse.

And then again came equinoxial spring; crocuses appeared; trees, each after its kind, put forth furtive leaves; for "April Showers" all too often were but chilling northeast rains. Indeed there was no Spring—rather a wave-motion of subsiding winter and protesting summer. But in June the Garden City had come again into its own. From a distance one saw many a steeple, rising from the green, as landmarks, and in the distances the gray bulk of grain elevators.

The Garden City was triparted by a river with two branches; thus it had its three back yards of urgent commerce, where no gardens grew;—and as well its three shanty-towns.

On occasion, when a spell of hard weather had held the lumber fleet in port, one on watch might see the schooners pour in a stream from the river mouth, spread their wings, and in a great and beautiful flock, gleam in the sunlight as they moved with favoring wind, fan-like towards Muskegon and the northern ports.

The summer was dry. During September the land winds blew hot and steadily.

The legend has it that a small flame, in shanty town, destroyed the Garden City in two awful nights and days. The high winds did their carrier's work. The Garden City vanished. With it vanished the living story, it had told in pride, of how it came to be. Another story now began—the story of a proud people

and their power to create—a people whose motto was "I will"—whose dream was commercial empire. They undertook to do what they willed and what they dreamed. In the midst of the epic of their striving, they were benumbed by the blow of a great financial panic, and when Louis returned from Paris the effect of this blow had not wholly passed—though the time was nearing. The building industry was flat. Finding thus no immediate use for his new-fangled imported education, and irking at the prospect of idleness, he bethought him to see what others might be doing in their lines, and at the same time get the lay of the land, something he had not found time to do during his first visit. Daily he made his twenty miles or more in the course of a systematic reconnaisance on foot. When this adventure had come to its end, he knew every nook and corner of the city and its environs, and had discovered undisturbed all that had formed the prairie setting of the living Garden City, and all that had remained undestroyed.

Curiosity seemed to be Louis's ruling passion; always he was seeking, finding something new, always looking for surprise sensations, always welcoming that which was fresh and gave joy to the sight. He had a skill in deriving joyful thoughts from close observation of what is often called the Commonplace. To him there was nothing commonplace—everything had something to say. Everything suggested it be listened to and interpreted. He had followed the branches of the Chicago River, had located the lovely forest-bordered River DesPlaines, and the old-time historic portage. Had read Parkman's vivid narrative of La Salle and the great Northwest, and his wonder stories of Marquette and Joliet, and he shared in mind the hardships of these great pioneers. Thus he came to know the why and wherefore of the City; and again he said: *This is the Place for me!* This remnant scene of ruin is a prophecy!

In a while the pulse of industry began the slow feeble beat of revival, and the interrupted story of imagination and will, again renewed its deep refrain in arousing energy. The Garden City had vanished with its living story. That tale could not be twice told; that presence could not be recalled. It had gone forever with the flames. Hence a new story must be told. Naught else than a new story could be told. Not again would the city be the same. It could not be the same—men could not now be what they were. It was the approach of this new story that excited Louis; he would bide his time. He worked briefly now, at intervals, in the office of this or that architect, until he had nearly covered the field. These men were mostly of the elder generation, whose venerable clients clung to them for Auld Lang Syne. They were men of homely make-up, homely ways. Louis found them very human, and enjoyed their shop-talk, which was that of the graduate carpenter. He did not demur because they were not *diplomés* of the Beaux Arts. He preferred them as they were; much of their curious wisdom stuck to him. They were men of their lingering day. To them Louis was a marvel of speed. Indeed one of the younger of them, who laughed like a goat, remarked to his partner: "That Irish-*man* has ideas!" He was a caustic joker and a man of brains, this same Frederick Baumann. Educated in Germany to the point of cynicism, he was master of one idea which he embodied in a pamphlet entitled "A Theory of Isolated Pier Foundations," published in 1873. The logic of this essay was so coherent, its common sense so sound, that its simple idea has served as the basis of standard practice continuously since its day. All honor therefore to Frederick Baumann, man of brains, exploiter of a new idea, which he made up out of his head. His vigorous years reached on to ninety-five, and as each one of them passed him by in defile, the world and its people seemed to his sharp, mirthful eye, to grow more and more ridiculous—a conviction that gave him much comfort as his vertebrae began to curve. Louis met him frequently of evenings, at the gymnasium, and liked to talk to him to get his point of view, which he found to be not bitter, but Mephistophelian. He was most illuminating, bare of delusion, and as time went on Louis came to regard him as a goat-laughing teller of truths out of school—but he, Louis, did not forget.

Reliable text books were few in those days. Due to this fact Louis made Trautwine's "Engineers' Pocket Book" his Bible, and spent long hours with it. The engineering journals kept close track of actual current doings, and thus Louis found himself drifting toward the engineering point of view, or state of mind, as he began to discern that the engineers were the only men who could face a problem squarely; who knew a problem when they saw it. Their minds were trained to deal with real things, as far as they knew them, as far as they could ascertain them, while the architectural mind lacked this directness, this simplicity, this singleness of purpose—it had no standard of reference, no bench-mark one might say. For he discerned that in truth the science of engineering is a science of *reaction*, while the science of architectural design—were such a science to be presupposed—must be a science of *action*. Thus Louis arranged in his mind the reciprocal values of the primary engineering and the primary architectural thought, and noted the curious antagonism existing between those who professed them. The trouble as he saw it was this: that the architect could not or would not understand the real working of the engineering mind because it was hidden in deadly literal attitude and results, because of the horrors it had brought forth as misbegotten stigmata; while the engineer regarded the architect as a frivolous person of small rule-of-thumb consequence. And both were largely right: both professions contained small and large minds—mostly small or medium. Nevertheless they were all

human beings, and therefore all ridiculous in the Mephistophelian sense of Frederick Baumann.

About this time two great engineering works were under way. One, the triple arch bridge to cross the Mississippi at St. Louis, Capt. Eades, chief engineer; the other, the great cantilever bridge which was to cross the Chasm of the Kentucky River, C. Shaler Smith, chief engineer, destined for the use of the Cincinnati Southern Railroad. In these two growing structures Louis's soul became immersed. In them he lived. Were they not his bridges? Surely they were his bridges. In the pages of the Railway Gazette he saw them born, he watched them grow. Week by week he grew with them. Here was Romance, here again was man, the great adventurer, daring to think, daring to have faith, daring to do. Here again was to be set forth to view man in his power to create beneficently. Here were two ideas widely differing in kind. Each was emerging from a brain, each was to find realization. One bridge was to cross a great river, to form the portal of a great city, to be sensational and architectonic. The other was to take form in the wilderness, and abide there: a work of science without concession. Louis followed every detail of design, every measurement; every operation as the two works progressed from the sinking of the caissons in the bed of the Mississippi, and the start in the wild of the initial cantilevers from the face of the cliff. He followed each, with the intensity of personal identification, to the finale of each. Every difficulty encountered he felt to be his own; every expedient, every device, he shared in. The chief engineers became his heroes; they loomed above other men. The positive quality of their minds agreed with the aggressive quality of his own. In childhood his idols had been the big strong men who *did* things. Later on he had begun to feel the greater power of men who could *think* things; later the expansive power of men who could *imagine* things; and at last he began to recognize as dominant, the will of the Creative Dreamer: he who possessed the power of vision needed to harness Imagination, to harness the intellect, to make science do his will, to make the emotions serve him—for without emotion nothing.

This steadfast belief in the power of man was an unalloyed childhood instinct, an intuition and a childhood faith which never for a day forsook him, but grew stronger, like an indwelling dæmon. As day by day passed on, he saw power grow before his eyes, as each unsuspected and new world arose and opened to his wonder eyes; he saw power intensify and expand; and ever grew his wonder at what men could do. He came in a manner to worship man as a being, a presence containing wondrous powers, mysterious hidden powers, powers so varied as to surprise and bewilder him. So that Man, the mysterious, became for him a sort of symbol of that which was deepest, most active in his heart. As months passed and the years went by, as world after world unfolded before him and merged within the larger world, and veil after veil lifted, and illusion after illusion vanished, and the light grew ever steadier, Louis saw power everywhere; and as he grew on through his boyhood, and through the passage to manhood, and to manhood itself, he began to see the powers of nature and the powers of man coalesce in his vision into an IDEA *of power*. Then and only then he became aware that this idea was a *new idea*,—a complete reversal and inversion of the commonly accepted intellectual and theological concept of the Nature of man.

That IDEA which had its mystical beginning in so small a thing as a child's heart, grew and nurtured itself upon that child's varied consistently continuing and metamorphosing experiences in time and place, as has been most solicitously laid bare to view in detail, in the course of this recital. For it needs a long long time, and a rich soil of life-experience, to enable a simple, single idea to grow to maturity and solid strength. A French proverb has it that "Time will not consecrate that in which it has been ignored," while the deep insight of Whitman is set forth in the line, "Nature neither hastens nor delays."

Louis's interest in engineering as such, and in the two bridges in particular, so captivated his imagination, that he briefly dreamed to be a great bridge engineer. The idea of spanning a void appealed to him as masterful in thought and deed. For he had begun to discern that among men of the past and of his day, there were those who were masters of ideas, and of courage, and that they stood forth solitary, each in a world of his own. But the practical effect of the bridges was to turn Louis's mind from the immediate science of engineering toward science in general, and he set forth, with a new relish, upon a course of reading covering Spencer, Darwin, Huxley, Tyndall, and the Germans, and found a new, an enormous world opening before him, a world whose boundaries seemed destined to be limitless in scope, in content, in diversity. This course of reading was not completed in a month, or a year, or in many years; it still remains on the move.

What Louis noted as uppermost in the scientific mind, was its honest search for stability in truth. Hitherto Louis had regarded his mathematics as an art; he had not followed far enough to see it as a science. Indeed he had hitherto regarded every constructive human effort as an art, and to this view he had been held through the consistent unfolding of the Idea. Inevitably this view was to return in time; through the channels of science itself. For that which at once impressed Louis as new to him and vital, was what was known as *"The Scientific Method."* He saw in it a power of solution he long had fruitlessly been seeking. His key to an outlook took shape in

the scientific method of approach to that which lay behind appearances; a relentless method whereby to arrive at the truth by tireless pursuit. He now had in his hands the instrument he wanted. He must learn to use it with a craftsman's skill. For the scientific method was based on exact observation from which, by the inductive system of reasoning, an inference was drawn, an hypothesis framed, to be held tentatively in "suspended judgment" until the gathering of further data might raise it to the dignity of a theory, which theory, if it could stand up under further rigorous testing, would slowly pass into that domain of ordered and accepted knowledge we fondly believe to be Truth. Yet science, he foresaw, could not go either fast or far were it not for Imagination's glowing light and warmth. By nature it is rigid and prosaic—and Louis early noted that the free spirits within its field were men of vision—masters of imagination, men of courage, great adventurers—men of one big, dominant idea.

* * *

In the course of Louis's daily working life, conditions were steadily improving. His engagements in offices grew longer, he began to prosper. The quality of work was improving. He had passed the day of his majority, and was now looking out for himself. His success in this regard made him proud. He was a man now, and he knew it. He knew he was equipped to hold his own in the world. He had made a reputation as a worker, and consorted now with a small aristocratic group of the highest paid draftsmen. They met at lunch in a certain favored restaurant. They talked shop; but Louis kept his major thoughts to himself. His plan was, in due time to select a middle-aged architect of standing and established practice, with the right sort of clientele; to enter such an office, and through his speed, alertness and quick ambitious wit, make himself so indispensable that a partnership would naturally follow. But this was merely a broad plan. He had no direct selection in mind, but was looking the field over from the corner of his eye. He was in no hurry. He believed in the motto: "Be bold but prudent." He wished events to shape themselves.

Now John Edelmann returned. During the dull spell he had been away in Iowa trying to play the game of farming. The game played him instead. He showed up at lunch one winter day, clad *à l'outrance* as a farmer, for his usual theatrical effect. Instantly the room was filled with sound as he lustily proclaimed the joys of farming in Iowa, twenty miles from nowhere.

He entered the architectural office of a firm named Burling & Adler. The single, very large square office room he flooded with language: he literally "ate up" the work, as he spouted. Naturally he joined the aristocratic lunch-club, and made things lively. As usual he monopolized the conversation, unless rudely interrupted. One need not surmise to whom the sound of his voice was music from the spheres. He cut loose on his latest fad—single tax—and lauded Henry George in superlatives. He drew the long bow, he colored all things rosy, told Irish stories well in the broad brogue, and on the whole was a nuisance —entertaining and agreeable.

One day, after lunch, John asked Louis to come over to the office to meet Adler, of whom he had spoken at times. Louis went along to please John. They entered the large bare room, drawing tables scattered about; in the center were two plain desks. Those who had business came and went unceremoniously. Both partners were present and busy. Louis thus had time to size them up. Burling was slouched in a swivel chair, his long legs covering the desk top; he wiggled a chewed cigar as he talked to a caller, and spat into a square box. He was an incredible, long and bulky nosed Yankee, perceptibly aging fast, and of manifestly weakening will—one of the passing generation who had done a huge business after the fire, but whom the panic had hit hard.

Further away stood Adler at a draftsman's table, full front view, well lighted. He was a heavy-set short-nosed Jew, well bearded, with a magnificent domed forehead which stopped suddenly at a solid mass of black hair. He was a picture of sturdy strength, physical and mental.

Louis was presented first to Burling who reached out a hand and said: "Howdy," in the distrait manner age so frequently bears toward strangely sprouting incomprehensible youth, separated by the gulf of years. Next, John led Louis to Adler whose broad serious face, and kindly brown efficient eyes, joined in a rich smile of open welcome. It did not take many ticks of the clock to note that Adler's brain was intensely active and ambitious, his mind open, broad, receptive, and of an unusually high order. He was twelve years Louis's senior, and in the pink of condition. Louis was of the exuberant age. Adler thought highly of John. The talk was brief and lively; Adler said nice things, questioned Louis as to his stay at the Beaux Arts. The little talk ended, Louis left, John remained in his preserve. This was the last that Louis saw of Adler for many moons. He was pleased to have met him and to have reason heartily to respect his vigorous personality. But he was no part of Louis's program, hence he soon faded from view, and became almost completely forgotten. Louis was satisfied with things as they were going. He was ambitious but cautious; he was waiting for the right man to show up. He did not remain too long in any one place, and each time increased his salary.

Meanwhile his days were for work; his nights for study, for reflection, and gradual formulation of ideas subsidiary to the main Idea he was consciously now working out alone. This form of solitude did not disturb him. He saw that a *Clopet demonstration* meant a matter of years of work and growth. He was disturbed, however, by the elusive quality of the main thought he was pursuing, which seemed to recede and grow larger even as he grew abler to deal with it.

On a recent Christmas his father had given him a copy of John Draper's work on "The Intellectual Development of Europe," in two volumes; still a notable work of the day. This he read and reread with absorbing interest: passing over its controversial trend; for the "war between science and religion" as it was called, was still raging. The broad division of the work into an "Age of faith," and an "Age of reason" held his interest, as he saw set forth the emergence and the growth of science as the spirit of man sought and found freedom in the open. This coincided with his own belief, that man's *spirit* must be free that his *powers* may be free to accomplish in beneficence. He had discovered, to his annoyance, that in the architectural art of his day, the spirit of man was not free, nor were his powers so liberated and so trained that he might create in beneficence. Not only this, but that for centuries it had been the case that the art had been belittled in superstitions called traditions—and lived on by virtue of a thin and baseless faith—and John Edelmann's theory of *suppressed functions,* recurred to him as broadly set forth, in confirmation, in Draper's heavy work. Further than this, Louis felt as a result of reading Draper, that his thoughts concerning architecture must broaden into a perfected sympathy with mankind. That Man, past and present, must and would become more and more significant, would be found to have filled a greater rôle than any art, than any science. That man, perhaps and probably was the only real background that gave distinction to works appearing in the foreground as separated things. Or perhaps was it the invisible spirit of mankind that pervaded all things, all works, all civilizations, and informed them with the sense of actuality? That his, Louis's true work, was now and henceforth to lie in the study of what man now thought, and had thought through the centuries. Thus the task for him grew larger, and the time required, longer—for he was still in the plastic formative groping stage.

In Darwin he found much food for thought. The Theory of Evolution seemed stupendous. Spencer's definition implying a progression from an unorganized simple, through stages of growth and differentiation to a highly organized complex, seemed to fit his own case, for he had begun with a simple unorganized idea of *beneficent power,* and was beginning to see the enormous complexity growing out of it, and enriching its meaning, while insistently demanding room and nurture for further growth, until it should reach that stage of clarity through the depths of which the original idea might again be clearly seen, and its primal power more fully understood. Thus, Louis, while still in a haze, felt the courage to go on. He had been reading the works of men of matured and powerful thought, 'way beyond his years: but what he could grasp he hung on to. He felt the enthusiasm of one who is on the way, and who senses that his goal is real.

* * *

One day John Edelmann, who meanwhile had entered into a partnership with a man named Johnson, who did school work, sent for Louis to come over that evening—said he had something to say. And this was his story: That Adler had cut loose from Burling, set up independently, and, in collaboration with George A. Carpenter, a resourceful promoter, had put through the New Central Music Hall, now nearing completion, and had other work on hand. The time was early in 1879. John urged that this was Louis's opportunity. That Adler had all the strong points, but was feeble in design and knew it. That he had talked the matter over several times with Adler, that Adler was cautiously and eagerly interested, but timid in making advances. Louis saw the point at once. So they made a second call on Adler. There ensued a mutual sizing up at close range, very friendly indeed. And it was then and there agreed that Louis was to take charge of Adler's office, was to have a free hand, and, if all went well for a period, and they should get along together, there was something tangible in the background. Louis took hold and made things hum. Soon there came into the office three large orders; a six-story high grade office building—the Borden Block; an up-to-date theatre, and a large substantial residence. Louis put through this work with the efficiency of combined Moses Woolson and Beaux Arts training. It was his first fine opportunity. He used it. He found in Adler a most congenial co-worker, open-minded, generous-minded, quick to perceive, thorough-going, warm in his enthusiasms, opening to Louis every opportunity to go ahead on his own responsibility, posting him on matters of building technique of which he had a complete grasp, and all in all treating Louis as a prize pet—a treasure trove. Thus they became warm friends. Adler's witticisms were elephantine. He said one day to Louis: "How would you like to take me into partnership?" Louis laughed. All right, said Adler, draw up a contract for five years, beginning first of May. First year you one third, after that, even. Louis drew up a brief memorandum on a sheet of office stationery, which Adler read over once and signed.

On the first day of May, 1880, D. Adler & Co.

moved into a fine suite of offices on the top floor of the Borden Block aforesaid. On the first day of May, 1881, the firm of Adler and Sullivan, Architects, had its name on the entrance door. All of which signifies, after long years of ambitious dreaming and unremitting work, that at the age of 25, Louis H. Sullivan became a full-fledged architect before the world, with a reputation starting on its way, and in partnership with a man he had least expected as such; a man whose reputation was solidly secured in utter honesty, fine intelligence and a fund of that sort of wisdom which attracts and holds. Between the two there existed a fine confidence and the handling of the work was divided and adjusted on a temperamental basis—each to have initiative and final authority in his own field, without a sharp arbitrary line being drawn that might lead to dissension. What was particularly fine, as we consider human nature, was Adler's open frank way of pushing his young partner to the front.

Now Louis felt he had arrived at a point where he had a foothold, where he could make a *beginning* in the open world. Having come into its responsibilities, he would face it boldly. He could now, undisturbed, start on the course of practical experimentation he long had in mind, which was to make an architecture that fitted its functions—a realistic architecture based on well defined utilitarian needs—that all practical demands of utility should be paramount as basis of planning and design; that no architectural dictum, or tradition, or superstition, or habit, should stand in the way. He would brush them all aside, regardless of commentators. For his view, his conviction was this: that the architectural art to be of contemporary immediate value must be *plastic;* all senseless conventional rigidity must be taken out of it; it must intelligently serve—it must not suppress. In this wise the forms under his hand would grow naturally out of the needs and express them frankly, and freshly. This meant in his courageous mind that he would put to the test a formula he had evolved, through long contemplation of living things, namely that *form follows function,* which would mean, in practice, that architecture might again become a living art, if this formula were but adhered to.

The building business was again under full swing, and a series of important mercantile structures came into the office, each one of which he treated experimentally, feeling his way toward a basic process: a grammar of his own. The immediate problem was increased daylight, the maximum of daylight. This led him to use slender piers, tending toward a masonry and iron combination, the beginnings of a vertical system. This method upset all precedent, and led Louis's contemporaries to regard him as an iconoclast, a revolutionary, which was true enough—yet into the work was slowly infiltrated a corresponding system of artistic expression, which appeared in these structures as novel, and to some repellent, in its total disregard of accepted notions. But to all objections Louis turned a deaf ear. If a thousand proclaimed him wrong, the thousand could not change his course. As buildings varying in character came under his hand, he extended to them his system of form and function, and as he did so his conviction increased that architectural manipulation, as a homely art or a fine art must be rendered completely plastic to the mind and the hand of the designer: that materials and forms must yield to the mastery of his imagination and his will; through this alone could modern conditions be met and faithfully expressed. This meant the casting aside of all pedantry, of all the artificial teachings of the schools, of the thoughtless acceptance of inane traditions, of puerile habits of uninquiring minds; that all this mess, devoid of a center of gravity of thought, and vacant of sympathy and understanding, must be superseded by a sane philosophy of a living architecture, good for all time, founded on the only possible foundation—Man and his powers. Such philosophy Louis had already developed in broad outline in the course of his many dissatisfactions and contemplations. He wished now to test it out in the broad daylight of action, and to perfect its form and content. This philosophy developed will be set forth in these closing chapters.

It is not to be supposed that Louis arrived directly at results as though by magic. Quite the contrary, he arrived slowly though boldly through the years, by means of incessant thought, self correction, hard work and dogged perseverance. For it was his fascinating task to build up a system of technique, a mastery of technique. And such system could scarcely be expected to reach its fullness of development, short of maturity, assuming it would reach its fullness then, or could ever reach it; for the world of expression is limitless: the theory so deep in idea, so rich in content, as to preclude any ending of its beneficent, all inclusive power. And we may here recall Monsieur Clopet, the book of descriptive geometry that went into the waste basket, and the thunderclap admonition: "Our demonstrations shall be such as to admit of no exception."

(*To be continued*)

Photographs of the Pageant

The frontispiece of this issue gives a very fine picture of the arrangement of the pageant held at the Lincoln Memorial, 18 May last, on the occasion of the presentation of the Institute Gold Medal to Mr. Henry Bacon.

Enlargements are being prepared and by the time this notice appears will be ready for sale. The price is $5.00 each and orders should be sent to the office of the JOURNAL.

The Convention---As One Architect Saw It

There are two ways in which the Fifty-sixth Annual Convention of the American Institute of Architects may be reported—both of them correct and complete. I am going to give you both, and I would suggest that you use them both.

Firstly, it can be done briefly, clearly and without too much uninteresting detail. Thus: *"C'est fini."*

Secondly, it can be done in detail, not so clearly, not so briefly, and quite uninterestingly. Here goes:

At about 10 a.m. on the morning of the 16th of May in this nineteen hundred and twenty-third year of our Lord, there gathered together, in the Hemicycle of the Corcoran Gallery of Art in our good City of Washington, the following distinguished persons:

The President of the Institute,
The Secretary, the Treasurer,
The New York Chapter,
Mr. Holsman of Chicago,
Eddie Kemper,
Mr. Granger's Straw Hat from Panama,
Whitaker's neckties from Heaven knows where,
the Howling mob and Mr. Knickerbacker Boyd.

Among the Howling Mob one noticed a sprinkling of Decorated Hospital Builders, and a number of undecorated ex-Soldiers. Some Ladies were present also, so the Mob took off its hat.

The Usual Gangs were there, and a few—a very few—new ones who will be very glad to leave it to the Usual Gangs entirely, in the future.

The party opened in very impressive style with three raps on the table of a mallet 150,000 years old (don't miss a zero). It made one think of the story in the Bible about the bird that "beaned" a Lion or something with the Jaw-bone of a very old Dinosaurus. Thus impressively rapped, the curtain went up and the War was on. The President made a speech and was applauded so that the welkin would have "rang" had it been there. He appointed a Resolutions committee consisting of Mr. Maher of Chicago, Mr. Hunt of California (no relation to Helen) and Mr. Levi's Sociable Smile.

The Treasurer waded through a lengthy report on FINANCE but did it so gracefully that not even the soles of his feet were wetted. This matter, frequently so sad, was so delicately handled by the master that all eyes stayed as dry as the throats that went with them. His only *faux pas* was his courteous objection (which had no weight) to smoking.

The Secretary presented the voluminous report of the Board of Directors so beautifully that no one went to sleep, and very few went out. Several times later in the Convention, the Secretary proved that "they can come back" by dragging this same report out piecemeal and moving Mr. Holsman to speech.

After several hours of daylight spending in the accomplishment of nothing, the Convention adjourned to the Hotel Washington where a fair Dollar Luncheon was served for Two Dollars.

At 2:00 p.m. the War was resumed, but in a more peaceful and enlightening fashion—Mr. Sturgis in the Chair.

Professor Edgell, Dean of the Architectural School at Old John Harvard's Wayside Tavern, spoke about the value of collaboration by and between artists themselves, as well as between Artist and the Philistine Flock. He was good.

Professor Baldwin of Columbia University said he was embarrassed, but he wasn't, and he spoke very well and was much applauded. He was followed by Professor Langfeld, of Harvard. This gave Harvard the "edge" on the Afternoon's entertainment. (Ex-Harvard Rah-Rah's please note). He handed us some "Deep Stuff" but its very depth made it good. For a moment he got real good and modern and transposed some literature into Greenwich Village Verse.

All three of these Speakers quoted St. Paul (not the one across from Minneapolis—the other one). I'll bet that you will agree with me that he was a smart old bird, and were he living in the flesh today, he would not be an Architect, nor a Professor, nor even an Editor. He'd be a Banker, or a short story writer, or a Movie Director.

And then Mr. Jenkins of the *Atlantic Monthly* really said something. He Spoke about PEOPLE—regular people—and it was darn good.

The entire text of the afternoon's addresses should be published in the Journal. If you have to wash out some advertisements to make room for them, chloroform the Treasurer and do it.

In the evening, dear old Doctor Walker proved that America, in spite of herself—in spite of Americans, is producing the world's best Architecture. And fearing that mere words were not enough, he proved it further with pictures.

On the second day, everybody got up late and the ball started rolling (to gather more moss) at 10:30. Not everyone was there even at that very late hour, but the New York Chapter was there, so things were started. A venerable member, Mr. Bruce of the Class of '73, who said he was eighty-eight years young, was received with much applause. I noticed frequently that any diversion from routine bunkum received *much applause*. Mr. Glenn Brown was also presented to the Convention and received with much applause. Dear Mr. Brown was "routine" for a good many years and really did more than anyone else toward starting the routine routining properly—but he is just a *chèr confrère* now, like anybody else.

The nominations were then read out, and each one was promptly closed by the New York Boys before anyone else knew what it was all about. Mr. Holsman beat the New Yorkers to it for *one time* and objected to the omission of Mr. Garfield's name from the ballot. Mr. Garfield rose to the occasion and over-ruled Mr. Holsman's objection.

Colonel Wood, of the Army—and the Washington, D. C., Chapter, reported for the Committee on Cre-

dentials in strict accordance with Major Moss' book on Army Paper-work.

Mr. Knickerbacker Boyd got one in edgewise along about here, but the eighteen New Yorkers picked up the floor and walked off with it, so Mr. Boyd's edge was soon dulled.

Mr. Lubschez gave the Delegates a Drawing Board Method for getting a Perspective on the operations of the Press, at this point—and it worked out so the Press has $200 and Charlie Whitaker. Almost, but not quite, a One Point Perspective.

Mr. Whitaker was then looked for, called for, and waited for, and after a proper delay, to give the thing atmosphere, in he comes—Hat, Stick, Niftie Necktie and all.

After this flight into the realms of fiction and fancy, Mr. Zantzinger reported on the activities of the Education Committee. His accent was beautiful—it is delightful to learn that the "Land of Nod" can produce such an accent. He had so many interruptions, however, that his report looks better in the OFFICIAL MINUTES than it sounded.

One of the interruptions took the form of Mr. Greenley, who deprecated Straw Hats at the Pageant.

Mr. Van Pelt stole a few minutes to report on the Committee of Public Information—and then Mr. Brown, Minneapolis Brown, reminded the Delegates of the Small House Bureau and gave everybody a book to copy Small Houses out of. NOTE: Don't let your Clients—or prospective Clients—see this book. It is too good.

And at 12:45 the Convention was adjourned until the afternoon. No objections were raised to this.

Some members may have gone to the Washington Hotel for Luncheon—your correspondent did not—he could not see the Two Berries necessary. So if anything of moment happened there—which is altogether unlikely—it will have to go unrecorded.

The afternoon session commenced at 2:45. An argument was almost started regarding some proposed action on the Report of Mr. Brown's report—but it died in its youth—Mr. Holsman was not back from Luncheon.

There was some discussion of something relative to the Board of Jurisdictional Awards. There may be readers who are familiar with this apparently important affair. It is known to have occupied a great deal of the time and thought of a very distinguished member. Those practitioners who are in this "neck of the woods" know little about it, and doubtless transgress unknowingly, many of its decisions. Therefore, it is obviously a good thing—

Mr. Brown (Small House Brown) spoke, or rather reported about a "Basic Building Code." The name is good—all Building Codes are base affairs but provide little base to build on.

Mr. Hewitt reported on Competitions, which the Institute has been conscientiously, for years, endeavoring so to arrange as to keep out the Young Architect full of Enthusiasm and Ideas—in order that he may not "show up" the Old Architect full of Experience and Habit.

At this point the distinguished Secretary made a Bright Remark—as follows: "Mr. President: if we cannot find some contentious subject, I fear that we will be through with our business this afternoon." That was Mr. Holsman's cue—and he arose to the occasion most nobly—your correspondent is despondent over the fact that he cannot remember the particular thing Mr. Holsman was up in arms about at that time.

And finally the afternoon wore itself down to the point where a nap was possible, desirable, and enjoyable.

There were reams and reams, and encore, of Structural Service and Serviceable Structures and all the other things you can buy books about.

Mr. Voorhees laid the Foundation—Mr. Sullivan Jones dragged Old Terra Cotta on to the field—Mr. Brown (not of Minneapolis, but of the Bureau of Standards) poured some concrete slabs—Mr. Whitney, Chairman American Engineering Standards Committee did some more of the same—and the Structure being thus nearly achieved, Mr. Sullivan Jones wrote some specifications—and a real electric thrill was added by Mr. Lyman Clark of the General Electric Company.

After an afternoon of such Passionate Practicality every one—most every one—wanted to go home and take a bath. But the fates willed otherwise and the afternoon was extended into the evening with discussions concerning whether or not there was anything further to discuss. It was finally concluded at five-thirty.

The evening session was called to order at 9:00 p.m. by Mr. Russell. The President of the Institute was presented and our distinguished leader presented Medals to Mr. Arthur Matthews of San Francisco for excellent work in Painting—and to Mr. Frederick W. Goudy of New York for his beautiful work in the design and execution of Printing Types. Mr. Faville's remarks were particularly beautiful and Mr. Goudy's response—in which he laid a large proportion of his success to the collaboration of Mrs. Goudy—was very lovely.

Mr. Hewlett made an address on the "Architect's Responsibility in the Development of Industrial Art," and proved, to the delight of his audience, that he is just as skillful with words—and thoughts—as he is with Color, Texture, Light, Proportion and all the other components of Beauty whose apt Apostle he is. Your correspondent has hoped for many things in his day—but he hopes more than he has ever hoped anything else, that Mr. Hewlett's address be given the widest possible circulation among Architects and Craftsmen and Manufacturers.

In Commemoration of the 200th Anniversary of Sir Christopher Wren's death, Dr. Walker made a masterly address which did equal honor both to the Subject and the Speaker. The audience stood with bowed heads at the request of the Chairman, when Dr. Walker's tribute was concluded, in testimony of its respect for the Great Architect and Greater Man whom Dr. Walker had portrayed, and the session was adjourned at 10:45 p.m.

The *third and last day* opened auspiciously, both as regards the weather, which augured well for the evening (if one did not know Washington), and as regards the President's announcement that there was very little business still to do—or undo.

Mr. Parker and Mr. Boyd occupied the morning with

Photograph by Ben J. Lubschez

THE FIFTY-SIXTH ANNUAL CONVENTION IN THE HEMICYCLE, CORCORAN GALLERY, WASHINGTON

the very important question of Industrial Relations. There is, however, very little for your correspondent to relate in this connection. Brigadier General R. C. Marshall reported to the Convention the meeting of the American Construction Council recently held in New York.

Mr. Totten, of Washington, made a very interesting report on the last International Conference of Architects, held last year in Brussels—to which Conference Mr. Totten was the Institute's Delegate. It was voted at this conference that its next reunion would take place somewhere in America, in May, 1925.

Mr. Van Pelt made an announcement and a vote was called for relative to the placing of a loan on the Octagon Property.

This proposition called forth so much discussion that

your correspondent is unable to find, either in his memory, or in the Official Record of the Convention, just exactly what was voted on. Anyway, the Ayes had it.

The Treasurer made a few remarks in the effort to insure that the Convention fully appreciated the generous gift of $5,000 to furnish the Board Room at the Octagon House, made by the Allied Architects Association of Los Angeles. Although there seemed to be some reluctance on the part of the Delegates to accept this Noble Gift, there was no question about their thoroughly appreciating it.

There was some discussion about the fact that some Architects seem to be inclined to advertise. There is such a narrow margin of profit in this Pleasant Pastime which is such Bum Business, that it is difficult to understand that any Practitioner would endeavor, through advertising at any rate, to increase his tendency toward Bankruptcy. It seems they do it though—especially in the South.

Mr. Barber of New York, wanted to get all the Architects in the Country into the fold—meaning the Institute. He did not specifically state whether or not he wants those in the City, too. If this latter is true, and all those in the BIG CITY are dragged in—New York will own the future Conventions Lock, Stock and Barrel. Ye Gods ! ! ! ! ! !

Mr. Goldsmith of Kansas said there are still some people in Kansas who eat peas with a knife. Do they have knives with raised edges, or do they mash the peas first?

Hereupon the President expressed the fear that Mr. Boyd might return and start something, and the session was adjourned at 1:30.

In the Evening—Without Moonlight

In a Marquee, at the end of the Reflecting Pool—with Mr. Bacon's beautiful Masterpiece at the other end—the Convention came together again. The Marquee was

THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LINCOLN MEMORIAL JUST BEFORE THE ARRIVAL OF THE PAGEANT

built by the hand of man (the George A. Fuller Co., directed by Irving Porter of the Washington, D. C., Chapter)—and the whole picture and what was to follow was born in the Brains of two men (Monroe Hewlett and Howard Greenley)—but Beauty had sent her Spirit to sit with us, and she had cast her Mantle over and round about us—and it did not seem to be a Man-made or Man-thought thing at all. Little shivers still run up and down my spine every time I think of it.

The Dinner, of course, was only incidental. A number of *imported* Washingtonians had felt called to come in on the open side of the Marquee and sit at table, so that many who had paid for tickets—meal tickets—had to stand in the sand and see, smell and hear, but never taste. Your correspondent was one of these—and did not miss the dinner, as such, at all. The remarks made by various distinguished Officers and Guests of the Institute were doubtless very inspiring—you will have to turn to the Official Record for those. Before they came to pass, I was called to the Memorial by Mr. Greenley to take care of the Public and certain Very Distinguished Persons who were to arrive.

It had started to rain—and the old habits of thought made one wish it otherwise. Later developments proved, at least to me, that Beauty had not left us—but had rather sent her Twin Sister in the shape of rain, to increase the effectiveness of the Spectacle.

From the steps of the Memorial, where your correspondent had to take his post, the Marquee at the other end of the Pool looked like one of Hiroshige's prints—except that one could distinguish no detail. The Marquee was faintly visible as a long low line of soft light—with three triangular accents where the big Lanterns were hanging. The lovely music of the Marine Band came softly across the smooth water. Everything was smooth and still and fairylike. People came and had to be seated—but one was not conscious that they were people. The soft kindly rain seemed to *flutter* down, hesitate, and then lay itself softly on the paving. All who were there unconsciously spoke in whispers—and that is a significant thing.

At one stage in the dream, a portly gentleman appeared from nowhere in particular, and the chief usher directed him in a whisper, to a seat on the right. The portly gentleman came out of the dream and was discovered to be Mr. Taft, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. He smiled—he can do it so beautifully. The usher apologized for the informality of his reception and informed the Chief Justice that he was expected to come "in a burst of Glory"—"No," said Mr. Taft, "I came in a Dodge."

A little later a fine big car, brilliantly lighted and very real, came up to the foot of the steps and the Dream having been suspended for the moment in the usher's mind, the President of the United States was properly received. He was escorted up the steps of the Memorial and between the two central columns he awaited the arrival of the Pageant—or should one say, he awaited the climax of the Picture. There appeared away off, at the far end of the Pool, a little speck of light that separated itself from the luminous line of the Marquee. Slowly—oh, so slowly, it seemed—it grew bigger and perhaps brighter. There was music—beautiful music—soft and slippery like the rain. Presently one could distinguish a colored form behind the speck of light that was coming toward us. It seemed to me that the Universe had somehow grown tremendous and there were only two or three things in it. I *felt* the quiet, kindly man behind me—I *saw* two persons standing near—I *sensed* rather than felt or saw, a glowing, burning something that came quietly and surely on, and on, and seemed ready to burst—but without noise, without any noise whatever.

The burning, glowing something grew bigger, and brighter, and stopped ! ! ! One had not yet *seen* or *felt* that anything had been, or could be, added to the tremendous, silent Completeness that was over all. Suddenly—and it was very sudden and unexpected—the Something did burst, and there at one's feet—from nowhere—was Color, and yet no Noise. Then People began to speak and the Spell was broken. And so the Fifty-sixth Annual Convention of the American Institute of Architects was brought to a close. Opened with a mallet 150,000 years old, it was concluded with a glimpse of that Beauty that was born with the Worlds and will die with Time.

HARRY F. CUNNINGHAM.

The Journal Book Shop

In connection with the Convention the JOURNAL had a small book shop where the delegates spent a good many hours in looking over both old and new books. They also bought out our entire stock, before the convention was over, so we are happy to record an auspicious beginning.

The JOURNAL's Book Shop has started in a very modest way, and really as a part of its general publishing business, the extent of which is not generally realized. The venture began with "City Planning Progress," now long out of print and scarce. It was followed by "What is a House" (out of print); "The Housing Problem in War and Peace" (out of print); the "Structural Service Book" (a few copies remaining); "The Handbook of Professional Practice," now in its second edition, and by numbers of pamphlets. The Press of the A. I. A. also published Mr. Lubschez's "Over the Drawing Board," of which a second edition is now in preparation.

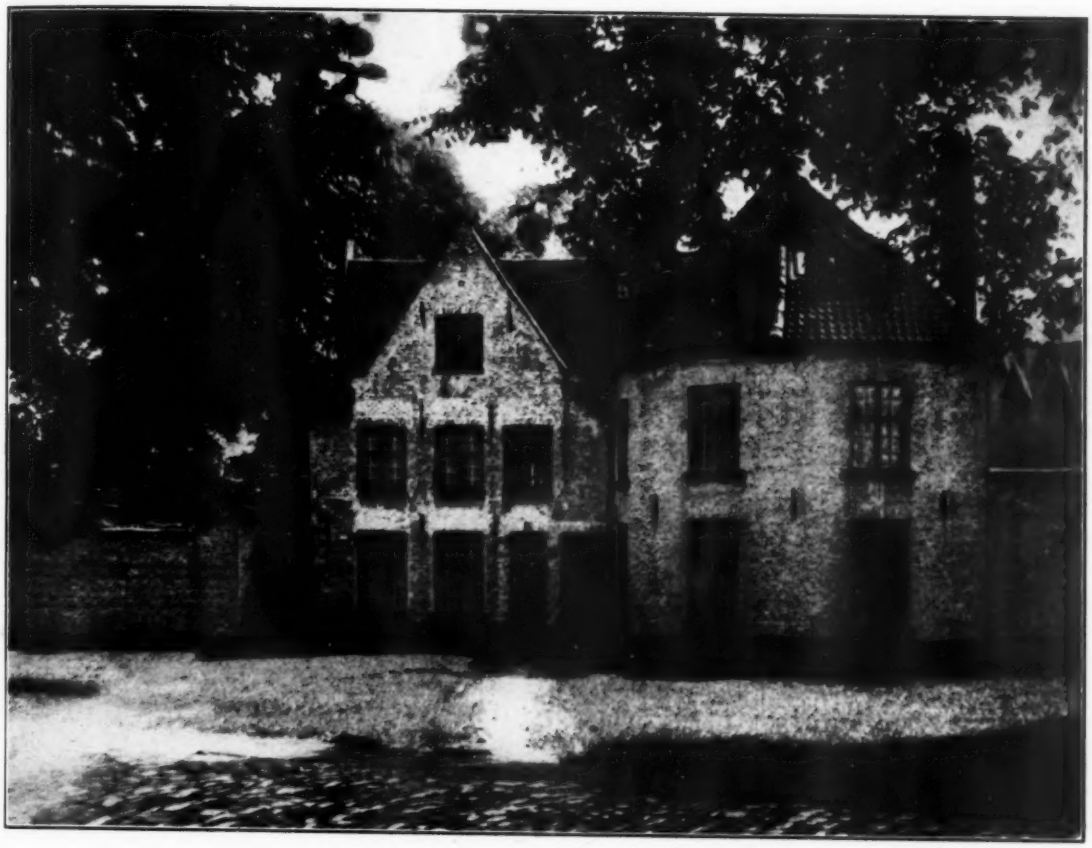
Very soon we shall bring out in book form "The Autobiography of an Idea," by Louis H. Sullivan, together with a portfolio of twenty drawings recently executed by him for the Burnham Library in Chicago as a record of his theories of the evolution of ornament. In connection with foreign publishers several American editions of important architectural books are under negotiations, and within a year, it is expected to bring out other works by American authors. (See the Advertisement on page XXI.)

The Beguinage at Bruges

Six Photographs by F. R. YERBURY

F. R. Yerbury

F. R. Yerbury



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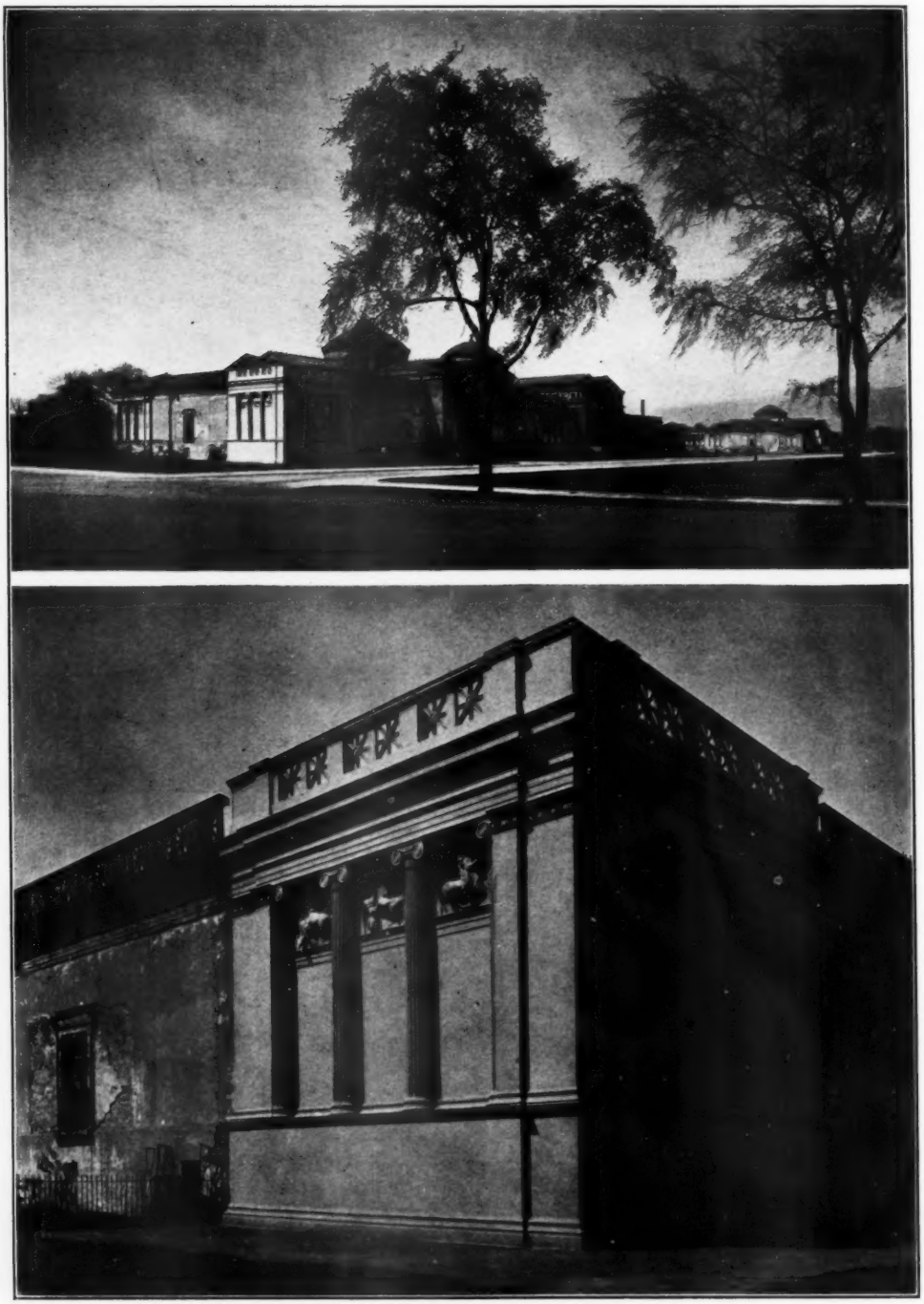

THE FINE ARTS BUILDING, JACKSON PARK, CHICAGO

Showing the Restoration of the Northeast Corner. See page 254; also the JOURNAL for April and May, 1922, showing the Unrestored Corner.

The Present Situation in the Building Industry

At the recent Convention of the American Institute of Architects in Washington, a paper was presented by General Marshall of the Association of General Contractors. It is of such interest that we print it at once, although it will appear in the Proceedings of the Convention. To a great many people it will appear that the contractors are beginning very slowly to grasp some of the fundamentals underlying what we call our problems. In that connection we print, immediately following General Marshall's paper, a contribution from Mr. Ackerman. It seems to the editor of the JOURNAL that the two papers supplement each other admirably, for although Mr. Ackerman probes much deeper and gives us the benefit of long years of patient study and reflection, the outstanding phenomena revealed by General Marshall are necessary factors in trying to appraise the situation as it exists.

Outline of Present Construction Situation for Discussion by the American Construction Council, 16 May, 1923[1]

The fear voiced some months ago by representatives of the construction industry, that the country's building activity was progressing at an over-rapid pace, and that soon this condition must precipitate a depression, is being borne out by developments within the industry today. Not only contractors, manufacturers and producers of the basic materials, but also leaders of labor have apparently come to realize that if the demand for new structures continues throughout the year at its present rate, production facilities, both in the basic industries and in the field operations of construction, will be inadequate, and that as a result of this condition the cost of construction will shortly mount to a prohibitive level.

The opinion here expressed is based upon a number of factors, each pointing to the same conclusion, which may be outlined as follows:

First—The volume of construction projected so far this year exceeds the volume of the same period of last year by more than 40 per cent, and the experience of 1922 has demonstrated that during that year the facilities for producing materials and conducting field operations were taxed about to the limit. Production in the basic materials is not only limited by the available supply of labor, but like other industries, by inadequate transportation. Construction likewise is limited by these factors and, in addition, the restricted supply of manufactured products, and materials from the basic industries.

Second—Stocks of materials on hand in practically all of the materials entering construction are lower than last year, while the unfilled orders are greater. Recent figures showed that orders on hand for common and face brick were about 60 per cent higher, and the stocks on hand, about 16 per cent lower than in 1922. Orders on hand for bathtubs, lavatories, and other sanitary ware ran 78 per cent higher and stocks on hand 40 per cent lower than last year. From the construction field reports indicate that material salesmen are slackening their solicitation of orders to a great extent and that manufacturers are, in many instances, unwilling to accept additional orders for any reasonable period of delivery.

Third—Material prices are rapidly rising. Contractors in different parts of the country report that jobbers and manufacturers are unable to maintain their quotations for more than a day or two at a time on certain manufactured products; and it appears that the current demand has reached that stage where competition has passed from the seller to the buyer. The latter are bidding for materials and sending the prices upward. Furthermore, to aggravate the situation, deliveries are becoming uncertain, and recourse is being taken to the practice of over-ordering for the job.

Fourth—Labor rates like the prices of materials, are rapidly increasing. In the building trades especially employers are placed in the position of bidding for services and paying bonuses to an extent in many instances even greater than in 1920. Regardless of what the different opinions may be as to the reasonableness of a wage of $15 or $18 per day, for skilled mechanics, we know that under present conditions these scales will soon stop building operations and leave the laborer in a more unfavorable position than he will occupy under steady employment at a lower wage.

Fifth—The production capacity of various industries is limited and appears unable to meet a continuation of the present demand. Even where plant facilities are adequate, the output may be limited by labor and transportation, and in most of the basic industries sufficient expansion cannot possibly be made to care for the demand. Under these circumstances the manufacturer's influence on prices is very limited and a wide variation or spread takes place between his prices and the ultimate price to the consumer. This spread is already under way. It should be noted, to the credit of many manufacturers, that they have not only shown a desire to hold their prices within bounds, but have actually succeeded in doing it to a great extent. Cement and steel are notable examples of materials in which factory prices have been relatively stable. But after materials leave the hands of the manufacturer, and by the time they have reached the hands of the final consumer in a boom period, a spread of price occurs that bears little relation to cost of production and distribution. Whether this is the result of speculation, local material corners, or merely the unbridled bidding of buyers, is a matter that should be ascertained and made known to the public.

No prolonged discussion of economics is necessary to point out the inevitable result of such a condition. A continuation of the present demand with its effect in raising prices will inevitably result before long in a curtailment of orders, decreased production, higher unit production costs and the entire gamut of the reactions

[1] A paper presented to the Fifty-sixth Annual Convention of the American Institute of Architects by Brig.-Gen. Marshall. 16 May, 1923.

of a depression. Downward price reaction, the liquidation and financial loss are consequences that must follow the lack of conscious action to stabilize the industry. In construction stabilization is probably more feasible than in any other industry as its demand is not transient but is cumulative; and in general, what is not built this season will serve as an outlet to production a year from now.

On the side of labor a similar condition exists. The unduly high wages of the present period must inevitably be followed by a reaction downward and a period of unemployment which will leave the laborer an annual useful wage considerably less than that which he could obtain if adequate efforts were made to moderate the demand for construction.

Considerable discussion has been devoted to the question of whether it is either possible or advisable to exert an effort to curb this demand and restrain inflation. The conclusion reached depends considerably upon special interests of the individual. It resolves itself finally into whether a large certain profit this season with its following depression is less to be desired than steady production with a continuing profit of moderate amount. At any rate there are several ways in which it is possible to exert an influence upon the situation.

The various influences that can be set in motion may be segregated into two classes: first, those that intend to increase production, and expedite materials to their source of consumption, and second, those that influence the demand for building projects. The first group may be outlined as follows:

(a) By speeding up the production of materials and expediting field operations it is possible to a certain degree to off-set the effect of excessive consumption. In some industries the possibilities from this source are limited, but in others requiring a plant outlay of moderate cost, some relief can doubtless be afforded. Construction companies can to some extent increase the efficiency of their management but it is possible that this will be necessitated anyway to off-set the decreasing output of labor, which is again noticeable.

(b) The speeding up of transportation is another factor that may furnish a certain amount of relief. Delays in transit, under-loading and holding of cars have practically the same effect as the curtailment of production. Experience of the past has demonstrated that both the mileage per car per day and the average loading of cars can be greatly increased by the exercise of care on the part of shippers. Therefore co-operation of shippers with the railroads will undoubtedly prove of benefit in relieving local shortages of material.

(c) There is also the question of restrictions to output on the part of local labor unions which has commonly been regarded as a useless practice so far as the welfare of labor is concerned, and a serious factor in the increase of construction cost. Elimination of these restrictions would exert a significant influence in holding cost below that point where building becomes uneconomical.

The second group of actions may be outlined as follows:

(a) Through publicity of construction costs the public will be enabled to follow the trend of prices and restrict its demand at the point where investments at existing costs become economically unsound, thus avoiding the injurious effect of taking precipitous action when costs have risen to the limit. The investment in new structure at an index number approximately 200 will unquestionably prove unsound in many instances when general level of prices has declined. By informing the public of the index number from month to month it can govern its actions accordingly. It may be possible also to delay governmental, municipal and state construction, until the peak of private building has subsided or until some curbing influence has been exercised on speculative building.

(b) An influence on speculative building can be exercised by the banking interests of the country and they may find it decidedly to their interest to take such action. At the present time, daily newspapers are carrying advertisements of the banks which tend to encourage speculative building and aggravate the inflation of the construction industry. They are probably safe in that point of expansion where they consider it advisable to curtail loans. However, for the welfare of the construction industry itself, a restriction of loan for speculative building at the present time or in the very near future, will produce a beneficial effect.

(c) In some states the tax exemption on new homes is in force and this might be repealed until the rate of building slows down. It is very questionable whether the construction of a home at present prices is a sound investment for the average citizen. Moreover, in some cities the urgent needs are believed to have been filled, and a great part of the present activity is what might be designated as luxury construction.

There are also certain other remedies of a miscellaneous character among which are following:

(a) Speculation and over-ordering of materials on the part of dealers and construction companies can be curtailed to a certain extent by the establishment of bona fide materials sale contracts obligating the buyer and seller to mutually advantageous provisions. At present the buyer purchases with great apprehension that his shipments will be delayed by transportation or that they may be diverted to fill orders at a higher price and, as a result, he orders more than his work actually requires. The effect of this practice is to build up a false demand that has an inflating influence on prices.

(b) There is, of course, a vague possibility of controlling the situation to some extent through the steadying of prices by dealers and the steadying of wages by labor. If any relief is to be derived from this source, it will probably have to come as the result of mutual agreements between contractors, the building trades and those concerned with the handling of materials. Just as it has been the custom and the right of venders to accept as much for their products as the buyer is willing to pay, so we may expect mechanics and laborers to be guided by the same policy. It is possible, however, that in local communities agreements may be made between these elements to lend their efforts in preventing runaway costs in construction.

Some of the actions here mentioned are sound enough in economic theory, and if they were attempted in earnest by all the parties involved in construction would doubtless produce the desired result, but it is questionable how far the necessary co-operation can be made to extend. There is, however, one influence that can be brought to bear effectively upon the situation—namely, the co-operation of the country's editors. If these men will publish the index number of construction for the country or for any particular locality and call the attention of their readers to the rising trend of construction costs, it is highly probable that they can effectively influence the demand. They may in this manner bring about a conscious steadying of the market that will avoid too much inflation.

In other words the choice lies open as to whether through some such action as is here mentioned the public chooses to control its demand while the price is at its present level or whether it prefers to exercise no influence on the course of events, and thus allow the industry to culminate in another period of stagnation, deflation and unemployment.

In view of the facts that have been brought to light in the present building situation it is recommended:

First—That banking interests curtail the financing of speculative building until after the close of Summer.

Second—That wide publicity be given to the increasing trend of construction costs, both of labor and material.

Third—That governmental, municipal and state construction departments be urged to delay their work as much as possible until September or October.

Fourth—That the co-operation of newspapers and trade publications be sought to keep the public informed of the monthly increases in construction costs, and that they be requested to exercise their influence in curbing the demand for construction until the early months of Fall.

Craftsmen -- Machines -- Credit -- Speed[1]

By FREDERICK L. ACKERMAN

Plans were on the boards for a vast amount of construction—the tallest office building, the largest hotel, the largest apartment house, the largest factory, and in Greater New York, a flood of tax exemption dwellings. Subways were in prospect, greater in length than the systems already bursting with traffic. The largest tunnel was under construction; more were in prospect. Across the Hudson was to be thrown a colossal bridge requiring twice as much steel as went into the making of the five great spans across the East River. So ran the year end (1922) summaries of events and forecasts of events to come in the world of building.

But shot through these summaries of events and forecasts were qualifying references to probable "labor troubles." Without exception writers referred to a seemingly new factor in the case; a "shortage" of skilled handicraft workmen hung like a cloud obscuring all but the bare forecasts of events to come. So some space was devoted to the prospect of developing the "open shop" and to what was being said and done toward the training of apprentices sufficiently skilled to carry on this work. The training of apprentices was a hopeful sign. But it would take time; and the number that could be so trained appeared pitifully small when set in relation to the number required to do the work in prospect. Altogether the shortage of handicraft workmen, upon whose knowledge and skill hung the erection of all these great projects, loomed as large among the events to come as did the projects themselves.

But what, precisely, had the writers in mind when they used the current term "shortage"? Has there been a falling away in the number of building trades handicraft workmen in relation to the population? Have potential handicraft building trades workmen, by reason of the long period of training required and the seasonal nature of employment in the building trades, gone into factories; have they become clerks, salesmen and chauffeurs? Has Europe ceased to pour in upon us a fresh supply of craftsmen already trained, as has been the case during the last half century? If such was the meaning which the writers attached to the term "shortage," it would have but partially covered the case.

For "shortage" has come to cover more than an actual falling away of numbers in the handicraft trades—more than a relative falling away of numbers in relation to population. Building operations, for example, which but a short time ago would have been viewed as creditable industrial performances within a span of eighteen months are now as a matter of course scheduled for completion within twelve, ten, eight or even six months' time. That is to say, the increasing demand for an ever more rapid turnover of funds involved in building, as expressed in the diminishing length of time assigned to the work of erection, is alone sufficient to turn a "normal" supply of building trades workmen into a "shortage."

The erection of buildings in the field goes on by the handicraft process, the pace of which is set by the workman and his tools. Some gains in productivity have taken effect here and there in the processes of erection since the introduction of the machine and mechanical power. But the methods and processes involved in the erection of small structures, which as yet, constitute the bulk of building, have hardly been touched by science, modern mechanical invention, the use of mechanical power or the process of quantity production. The work of the mason, the carpenter, the lather, the plasterer, the roofer, the tile setter, the painter and much of the work performed by "common labor" is carrid on in the same (industrial) manner as was the case before the introduction of the machine. It is not to be denied that many of the materials used in building arrive at the job in a more nearly

[1] This note took form in January; it was written with particular reference to the Landis Awards and the organized effort which was made in Chicago to enforce them. The point of view from which the note issues is that the economic and technological factors which bore upon the situation with which the Landis arbitration was concerned were overlooked in making the award and in the enforcement of it. It also was conceived as something of a forecast.
The publication of the note was delayed in checking and verifying some of the statements in it, so that the rapidly changing events outran the forecasts and it now issues as a statement after the facts.

finished state than formerly. But in the case of such materials and forms much of the work of assembling is done by handicraft workmen at the plant. Many new devices—largely the product of machine industry—are now deemed necessary in the finished building. But the use of these devices adds to the handicraft work involved in erection. So that, after due allowance has been made for the use of machines, mechanical power and the process of quantity production now involved in building erection, it remains approximately true that the erection of buildings is carried on at the pace of handicraft industry. The erection of buildings in the field is, after all, hand work.

But production as a whole is now carried on by the machine process, the pace of which is given by the machine driven by mechanical power. The machine process is inordinately productive and its productivity is an ever expanding function of scientific research, mechanical invention and the matter of fact engineering point of view with respect to the use of material resources and knowledge. So that the quota of handicraft workmen capable of keeping pace with the machine and the process of quantity production, or the number capable of using the products of the mechanical industries producing the materials which handicraft workmen turn into buildings should be a varying and an ever expanding number.[2]

Contrast, for example, the fabrication of cotton goods with the erection of buildings. Mechanical industry has increased the rate of producing materials and forms preparatory to the erection of buildings. But it has not materially increased the per-man speed of erection, whereas the introduction of the machine revolutionized the fabrication of cotton and increased the speed of production many fold. Again, contrast agricultural production as it is carried on throughout the West. At no point has the erection of buildings been touched by such a revolutionary change as took place when the machine process, through the production of harvesting machinery, sent to the discard the hoe, the scythe, the cradle and the flail. In contrast with the fabrication of cotton and the production of the basic agricultural products the erection of buildings belongs to an older—a slower order of industry.

The same factors which have operated to reduce the space of time consumed in the erection of buildings—that is to say, increase the speed of erection—have operated also to increase the speed of their obsolescence. A very large percentage of the structures erected within our rapidly expanding cities serve in the first instance as a medium for the turnover of funds. This turnover of funds takes place through sale of the property following close upon the erection of the structure or it takes place after the building has served its purpose for some time as an investment, or for paying taxes upon the land, while the land appreciates in value sufficiently to warrant the destruction of the building. In the typical case several structures of ascending value in turn occupy a plot of land before the cost of the structure reaches a point where it no longer appears likely that further appreciation of the land will exceed the cost of the last structure to be erected upon it.[3]

So that as it works out in the typical case, a premium is placed upon the erection of low cost structures, which is the same as saying under the current interpretation, non-durable structures. From the production of non-durable structures it follows as an unavoidable consequence that repairing, renewing and demolishing, and the replacement of old structures by new must be carried on at such an increased rate as to volume and speed as durability diminishes, or as the speed of obsolescence increases from the above or from other well known causes which need not be discussed here.

This bears directly upon the point in question in that repairing, renewing, demolition and the erection of replacements is done by handicraftsmen; and increased speed in the field of handicraft production is to be had only through the use of additional handicraft workmen.

If for good and sufficient business reasons we elect to use non-durable elements in our buildings in place of elements whose life span is a century or more, then it follows that the quota of handicraft workmen involved in the use of such materials must be increased by a multiple which corresponds to the relatively shorter life of the non-durable element. The significance of this may be readily seen when we note that the relative life of two materials which may be used for a given purpose in building may be expressed by the ratio of one to ten. Or

[2] No doubt objection will be offered to this broad statement; it will be pointed out that there is now a shortage of machine-made building materials and supplies. But there is slight ground for assuming that the shortage of materials is due to any lack of industrial capacity. It would seem to be a function of pecuniary management and control.

[3] In less than five years following completion, the hot water supply lines in the office building where I do my work had been renewed. In the apartment house where I live the work of replacing hot and cold water lines began eight years following completion. I am told by plumbing contractors that the latter case is fairly typical of structures in New York built within the last quarter century.

Now, it take a larger number of plumbers to reinstall than it does to do the work in the first instance. Some say twice as much labor is involved. So that it follows that we shall require in New York, for some time to come, a multiple of that number which would now be required had a policy of durable building been in force when all of these up-to-date, modern structures were erected.

It is stated that the home owners of the country spend well over half a billion dollars annually in the repair and renewal of rusted metal work, and that the greater volume of this work could be avoided through the use in the first instance of more durable material. After making due allowance for the volume of repairs and renewals which would attend the use of the most durable materials and for the cost of the materials used in such work, there still remains a large percentage of this half billion which represents nothing but waste—waste of money, materials and waste of handicraft labor.

Some idea of the magnitude and velocity already reached in the process of demolition and replacement in Manhattan may be gained from a tabulation by W. S. Straus & Co., appearing in the New York *Times* of May 17, from which the following is quoted: "Every year the equivalent of a city of 500 buildings is demolished on Manhattan Island, and every year a similar city of most imposing types of construction rises to replace the city that has disappeared."

An extract from the tabulation discloses the following figures:

	Buildings Completed				Buildings Demolished			
Year	Total	Dwellings	Tenements	Hotels, etc.	Total	Dwellings	Tenements	Hotels, etc.
1913	581	26	160	8	750	341	194	4
1914	432	35	119	13	657	304	255	40
1915	348	26	133	9	584	325	98	132
1916	316	17	145	8	654	307	90	1
1917	345	8	85	7	261	39	37	0
1918	195	7	20	3	373	110	44	4
1919	166	4	5	6	687	154	81	5
1920	253	4	26	8	679	284	111	4
1921	433	63	31	7	457	129	128	2
1922	540	45	102	9	634	249	220	3
Total ten years	3,609	235	926	78	5,736	2,242	1,258	165

if for what may be gained from a rapid appreciation of land values we elect to diminish the life of the structures we build, it again follows that the quota of handicraft workmen must be augmented in the proportion that we shorten the life of our structures generally. So that, strange as it may seem, out of the increasing speed of decay, the speed of obsolescence, and the extent to which demolition is carried on for purposes of profit, there arises in this era of credit economy and machine production the need for a quota of handicraft workmen not merely actually larger, but relatively larger than was needed during the days of slow moving, handicraft industry when men built with their hands and a few tools all that was built.

A "shortage" of handicraft workmen in the building trades, it would therefore seem, is not to be passed over lightly as a mal-adjustment which may be readily overcome by open shop methods of employment or by more adequate provision for their training. For it is not likely that the potential productivity of the machine process will remain stationary. Viewed from the standpoint of technology the productivity of the machine process is due to increase many fold. And one may safely predict not only a demand for single building operations of ever increasing magnitude, but a demand for even greater speed of erection. Evidently we have now reached a phase, in the development of our industrial system, where we must take account of the fact that it is composed of a great number of closely related and interdependent industrial units and that these units group themselves in two widely differing categories with respect to method and productivity. The modern industrial system is part handicraft and part mechanical.

This observation is highly significant when viewed solely as an industrial fact. But it takes on added significance when account is taken of the condition that modern industry is carried on by the rule of credit economy—investment for a profit. Industrial activity is now organized around the prospect of remunerative turnover of funds. Hence the rate of productivity—the speed—of the mechanical industries sets the pace at which it appears desirable—nay, necessary to carry on the erection of buildings.

But the erection of buildings does not as yet lend itself to the machine process nor to the methods of quantity production as that term has come to be understood. For the most part, it is a handicraft process. From which it follows that, in so far as the handicraft industries of building are essential to the operation of the industrial system as a whole, to that extent the productivity of handicraft industry limits the pace.

Certainly, far reaching consequences should be due to follow in train upon the development of such a condition —an industrial system, two great and vital parts of which run at two widely differing rates of productivity.[4] One would expect, for example, to find a differential accorded that element which of a necessity produces at the lower rate of speed in order to induce a greater number to enter that field. Thus might one interpret the many forms of housing subsidies which were resorted to so generally throughout the Western World in the decade or so before the war; or even our more recent tax exemption of dwellings in the State of New York. Not that such an interpretation is to be taken as a complete genetic account of the rise of the housing problem: it recognizes, rather, a causal factor of first magnitude in the action of so generally subsidizing the building industry as against other industries which produce necessities. It was a way of speeding up—of increasing the rate of productivity of that element of the industrial system which had fallen behind.

Under such an industrial system the employers of handicraft workmen should go to the greatest pains to develop and maintain a condition of impotence among those whom they employ. For only under a thoroughly coercive system of employment would it seem possible to maintain control over workmen who had fallen heir to a condition wherein their numbers automatically constituted a "shortage" whenever the industrial system began to pick up speed or to produce at the rate demanded by the use of credit and as set by the potential productivity of the basic mechanical industries. In the same way the industries which stand over as handicraft should constitute the weakest point in the line that offers resistance against the demands which workmen now and again see fit to make in their own behalf. By and large, the center of labor disturbances and the maximum gains secured by labor lie within the frontiers of handicraft industry.

It is true, the common stock of knowledge and the skill upon which turn the productivity of the modern industrial system is no longer borne by the handicraft workmen as was approximately the case during the early stages of the era of handicraft. But this is also true with respect to all the other groups that likewise constitute the productive units of the modern industrial system.

The position, but not the importance, of the handicraft workman has undergone a change. He no longer serves as the central figure in the industrial system as a whole. But he retains his position as the central figure in many great sectors of the system where his knowledge and his skill are quite as indispensable as is the technological knowledge of the scientist and the engineer.

The length of time required of the handicraft workman in order that he may learn to do his work competently differs but slightly from that required of the scientist and the engineer. This is not to say that the periods of training in the case of the handicraft workman, the scientist and the engineer, all come to a close within the same space of time. It is to remark that in so far as touches the run of handicraft workmen and the run of engineers and scientists, a period of from four to six years is ordinarily deemed necessary to fit them to function in their respective fields in the industrial system.

This similarity with respect to the length of time required in preparation and with respect to the importance of training has evidently been overlooked in the case of the handicraft workman. For ever greater stress

[4] The productivity of the various industries is here conceived in relation to the productivity of the untrained human unit involved, which is used as the base of reference.

has been laid upon the training of the engineer and th scientist, while the training of the handicraft workman has been left to chance where real obstacles have not been set in the way. These two contrasting attitudes toward the training of those who make up the productive factors serve but to increase the already widening discrepancy as between the productivity of handicraft and machine industry in that the abilities of the scientist and the engineer are very largely drawn upon to increase the speed or the productivity of the latter.

The handicraft workman in essential industries—particularly in the building industry—now occupies a peculiar position in that any technological advance in machine design or any attempt to launch building operations of still greater magnitude, or any attempt to bring such operations to completion within a still shorter space of time or the more general use of non-durable materials or the more rapid obsolescence of buildings brought about by whatever cause, automatically pushes the handicraft workmen over into a position where their numbers appear insufficient to do the work.

What is apparently in store, barring more effective retardation of the productive processes of industry through the operation of the price system, is the granting of price differentials to the handicraft industries or to such mechanical industries as depend largely upon handicraft work to complete the process. Such price differentials, in the case of labor, must be sufficient to overcome the handicap of the years of training required of the handicraft workman as against the days, weeks or at most months required of those who perform the run of operations in mechanical industry. They also must cover the handicap of seasonal work and work subject to weather, as against continuous employment in an industrial plant. There is the further handicap of the relatively lower status; handicraft work is rated as more or less degrading.

Beyond these factors are those which touch the handicraft industries as a whole and point to the granting of further differentials. Any increase in productivity of mechanical industry, due to the application of scientific knowledge, which would indicate the possibility of a more rapid turnover of funds in the processes of production or in the use of the product—any greater gains to be had from investment—any more general use of non-durable materials, any increase in the speed at which the process of obsolescence takes place in buildings by reason of the materials out of which they are built or by reason of appreciation of land values due to congestion—any of these make for the need of more handicraft workmen which again points to the necessity of granting a further price differential.[6]

It is to run counter to a well established opinion to suggest that the handicraft workman of the machine era still holds a position similar in point of strategic value, to that which he held during the era when production was a matter of handicraft only. But to the extent that business ends are served, to the extent that the modern community needs what he produces out of his knowledge and skill, to that extent the modern handicraft workman stands secure in that position which he gained during the era of handicraft.

It has been assumed that the handicraft workman, carrying an indispensable body of knowledge and skill without which buildings could not be erected and many of the processes of machine industry carried on, might be dealt with according to the latest businesslike formula of "handling labor"—that his labor might be classified as a commodity. But by treating labor as a commodity it becomes subject to the rules of purchase and sale as formulated by business traffic. In a business situation, such as constitutes our own time, such a classification, under the circumstances referred to, has its distinct advantages from the standpoint of the handicraft workman. For it follows under such a classification of his abilities that he is thrown into a position of possessing something which may be readily advanced in price under conditions of shortage; and the economic factors involved make directly for such a condition in the ordinary run of events.

To deal with such constantly recurring conditions of shortage of skilled handicraft workmen as are due to arise out of the businesslike management of production, plans will be laid to prevent an undue increase in wages. Recourse will be had to whatever gives promise of weakening the force of organization. Facilities will be developed for training apprentices and some attempts will be made to smooth out the employment curse. The use of loan credit with respect to building will be curtailed whenever a check upon building promises a reduction in wages. And a general curtailment of building all 'round will no doubt be suggested. The cost to the community at large of these various measures will not be rated as too high a price to pay for the power which such measures will give the business community over organized labor. A general curtailment of building operations will then be organized and the partial curtailment of building activities will be hailed as a "solution."

But it will be a "solution" only in the sense that it will reduce the item of wages in the cost of building. It will be the reverse of a solution in that it will operate to increase the discrepancy as between the supply of buildings and the number of buildings needed. But even in the face of so obvious a fact, such a move will appeal to "enlightened common sense" as the only satisfactory way of dealing with the problem. Which all goes to show how far the price system has run in shaping our point of view and in controlling our action. Tangible performance need no longer appear among the items of evidence which go to make up the account of work well done.

[6] See "Building for Profit"—Reginald P. Bolton. Also "The Passing of the Skyscraper," by Geo. C. Nimmons, in A. I. A. JOURNAL, November, 1922.

London Letter

The recent Exhibition of the Architecture Club which closed last month has been the most tangible sign in England of the revival of a public interest in architecture. The photographs and models exhibited in the fine salons of Grosvenor House attracted at first but a moderate attendance of the public. Soon, however,

the numbers of visitors increased to such an extent that it was decided to postpone the closing date for another week, and the satisfactory result has been that the guarantors of the naturally heavy exhibition expenses have not been called upon to make good an expected deficit, which augurs well.

The work exhibited revealed the unflagging skill and delight in small domestic work which is the strong point of English designers. Aided by the use of the sympathetic materials for wall and roof available, and with an unlimited tradition as a source of inspiration, the English small house designer still reigns supreme. The more limited number of essays in a larger domestic manner are almost equally successful, but the weakness displayed in the handling of large problems in commercial architecture is very apparent.

Particularly disappointing are some of the recent big West End stores. Criticism here is not based on the question of individual taste, but on sheer weakness of composition of the kind which has long ago been eliminated in American work of a similar category.

Recognition of this failure is shown by the lavish praise meted out to the new Bush Building by Messrs. Helmle & Corbett in Kingsway, which is quoted in comparison as a splendid achievement. And yet this building constitutes not only an offence in scale to its surroundings, but displays as its main Kingsway façade an architectural motive which has some of the worst qualities of modern wholesale pilfering from the antique. As the front to a fine office building the design is utterly inexpressive—as monumental architecture in the abstract its main merit lies in its simplicity and great size, which, however, creates a new and utterly impossible unit of scale for London streets.

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In connection with Kingsway, it is interesting to note an article by Mr. Trystan Edwards in the March number of "Architecture," the Journal of the Society of Architects.

The author amplifies a theme already enunciated in his interesting and thoughtful book of theory, "The Things Which Are Seen," namely the danger in street architecture of allotting to the height of buildings the same dimension as that governing the width of the thoroughfare.

The resultant equality is extremely unfortunate in practice and Bye-Laws, which perpetuate the angle of 45° as a basis for building heights will have a very deleterious artistic effect. Kingsway is an example of fine possibilities marred through this cause, and no doubt there exist important streets in New York, where failure to obtain beauty may be attributed to a like defect.

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The American Architectural Press has recently been unsparing in its criticism of recent English work. In a certain magazine in particular, the London County Hall and the new Port of London Authority building have been treated with a curt contempt which almost smacks of preconceived notions of what the design of such buildings should be. The withering comments on some of the Modern Dutch architecture are equally unsatisfactory. Logical explanation of the criticisms is not given, and there is here an obvious failure to understand periods of transition and the necessarily imperfect first attempts to evolve architecture which is not clothed in the old familiar European garb. The very imperfections of much of this work are an earnest for future success, for the architects have striven to design instead of being content with reproduction and selection, however eclectic, from well tried examples.

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The Chicago Tribune competition has aroused a certain amount of interest in England, and there are many English architects who will share with Mr. Louis Sullivan the opinion that the Second Premiated Design is the finer scheme. It is a curious coincidence that in the last two big international competitions, for the Tribune Building and the Cairo Hospital, the First Prize has been won by a citizen native of the competitions' country of origin. If it were possible to provide a representative international Jury, such competitions would gain in interest.

* * * *

Nothing finer in the way of architectural cinematographic stage setting has been seen in England than that provided for the Fairbanks' film of "Robin Hood." The average architect called upon to design a setting for this film would have provided as a background, a faithful reproduction of early English work of the period. But here we have the imaginative exaggerations which are the hallmark of original interpretative art as opposed to the mechanical process of conscientious reproduction. There is something inspiring in the colossal scale of the interior settings which awakened the appreciative faculties of the least initiated amongst the lay spectators. Some of the scenes have the grandeur and qualities of composition of a fine painting.

* * * *

Definite proposals appear to be on the tapis for the foundation in England of a School for Builders to provide for future builders, equal facilities to those enjoyed by intending architects.

The School would be financed by the Federation of Builders, and would provide the equivalent of a University Education with a sort of Master Builder's degree instead of the usual Pass or Honors degree in Law, History, etc.

The advantages of such a scheme are patent. The organization of a Contractor's business is a very complex one and there is no reason why the sons of Master Builders should not receive a full scientific school training both in theory and the elements of practice. This training would be completed by fuller practical work in the same way as is the case with the architectural student.

From the architect's point of view the scheme offers the promise of a better standard of education in the Building Trade and consequently enhanced understanding between the Trade and the Profession. Limited col-

laboration with the big architectural schools would increase the advantages of education on both sides, and would incidentally make possible the conservation of many of the finer traditions of building which are being gradually lost with the spread of commercial building. A revival of the spirit of the craftsman in the operative would not be beyond the range of possibilities, and might counteract the tendency towards mechanical repetition in design. The site for the proposed School is still undetermined, but it is to be hoped that it will not be too far removed from the large architectural schools of the Metropolis.

* * * *

There is at present being held in the Institute Galleries an exhibition of amazing drawings by William Walcot. His work is familiar to the architects of two continents, chiefly, perhaps, through his "Roman Compositions."

The present drawings are of ancient temples. Ephesus, Selinus, Baalbec, Luxor, all these places appeal to the beholder through Mr. Walcot's talent, which pictures them gay and sparkling in their original form and color surrounded with glowing life. If one has a reproach, it is that the cleverness of the drawings almost competes with the beauty of the subjects, but there remains the fact that Mr. Walcot's imagination like his talent is unique in this particular field.

* * * *

The latest scheme to gratify the desires of those interested in improving their knowledge of "the general principles of architecture and their proper application to present day building" is a series of six lectures now taking place under distinguished patronage. The lectures are given by well known architects, including H. S. Goodhart Rendel, Robert Atkinson, Professor Richardson, and Stanley Ramsey, and cover such subjects as "First Principles," "The Architecture of Religion," "Commerce," and the "Habitation," "Civic Architecture," and "The Architecture of the Future."

Held in large private houses, with an audience of persons really interested in the subject, the Lectures are proving to be yet another valuable link between the architect and the public. The idea is very similar to that of the causeries on music and other subjects which used frequently to be held in New York under the ægis of certain social "leaders." Proposals for the lectures did not emanate from any official body, a fact which lends to them an additional significance. "X."

May, 1923.

Restoration of the Fine Arts Building at Chicago, Illinois

By GEORGE W. MAHER[1]

The complete restoration of the Fine Arts Building in Jackson Park, Chicago, will become a reality. This undertaking so notably inaugurated by the Chicago Chapter, 20 June, 1920, has resulted in the agreement of the South Park Commissioners, custodians of this building, to reinstate it architecturally as it was during the World's Fair. The intrinsic value of this building, its historic background and the many purposes of service and of education for which it can be used make of the Chapter's achievement an accomplishment of national importance.

It seems difficult, indeed, to understand why there should have been continued opposition to such an enterprise, when a majority of the public favored its restoration. This is perhaps one of the phases of a democracy which is significant and which indicates the need of eternal vigilance on the part of those interested in the cultural growth of this country and in the orderly beautification of our cities; such progress is too often retarded by those in authority due to the lack of appreciation of art and of architecture.

The World's Fair was without parallel in history; it was International in scope and brought vividly to the senses and the mind the history and progress of the nations of the world, particularly in art and in industry. The Fine Arts building was the very heart of this great Exposition. It accommodated temporarily one of the greatest art exhibitions ever assembled. Thus the building was not erected as a temporary structure, since with the exception of the outside plaster covering and the peristyles, the building structurally was erected as semi-fireproof. The foundations are of brick and concrete; the exterior walls of sufficient thickness of brick and well bonded; the roof is supported by steel trusses. The governments of the world would not have permitted their priceless art treasures to have been exhibited in a building subject to conflagration and irreparable loss.

There was, therefore, a responsibility on the builders of the World's Fair, and in written record in the *Century Magazine* of October, 1892, Henry Van Brunt, one of the group of architects, says: "There is no building on the grounds which we should more regret to see destroyed at the conclusion of the exposition than this beautiful monument. Its essential structure is, as we have seen, fireproof; only its porticos, its peristyles and its exterior decoration details are temporary. They could be so readily replaced by permanent construction in the same form that the architects of all the buildings hope it may be permitted to remain as the most appropriate and worthy memorial of the Exposition of 1893."[2]

There appeared in the Chicago Press in June, 1920, a statement that the old Fine Arts Palace was to be destroyed; this notice came as a distinct surprise since there was a general understanding that the building would ultimately be restored. There had been discussions in the Chapter, led by Lorado Taft, the sculptor, who is

[1] Chairman of the Restoration Committee.

[2] The Fine Arts Building has several times been illustrated in the JOURNAL.

an honorary member of the American Institute of Architects, regarding the classic beauty of this building and expressing the hope that it might be spared. The press notice, therefore, was at once taken cognizance of by the Municipal Art and Town Planning Committee of the Chapter, which immediately assumed leadership in the effort to save the historic building. The members of the committee fully realized their responsibility as architects acquainted with the value and importance of this structure, and their duties as public spirited citizens. Likewise, they knew the opposition they would be obliged to meet. They, therefore, inaugurated a campaign of education and wide publicity and obtained the support of the entire press of Chicago, and the aid of civic organizations and prominent clubs. They were particularly fortunate in receiving assistance from the Second Congressional District of Women's Clubs, located on the south side of Chicago, who not only enthusiastically supported the plan of publicity and education outlined, but generously tendered the sum of $7,000 to the Chicago Chapter, which money was used to restore the northeast corner of the building in order to show the public that the full restoration work could be carried out, and to demonstrate the great architectural beauty of the building whereby to obtain the necessary support. In resurfacing the walls the mixture used was a combination of concrete and crushed quartz cast in monolithic form. The effect, in color, is that of a rich old Roman marble cut from solid blocks. The spirit is Grecian and the craftmanship well in keeping with the traditions of the past.

Through continuous effort and publicity since June, 1920, against strongly entrenched opposition, the public custodians of the building finally responded to public pressure and have agreed to restore the entire building; the following thought naturally arises in contemplation of this long drawn-out experience: Should it be assumed that a democracy has no standards or ideals respecting art and the beautiful, and in this respect is our form of government equal to an autocracy or some centralized form of authority? The answer can only be that in a democracy ideals and true progress can only be obtained by the education of the masses, and that whereas our form of government is without question the greatest in history, yet it also compels the greatest attention and personal sacrifice.

The restoration of the Fine Arts Building should, therefore, not only be viewed as an art asset,—an architectural masterpiece without peer,—a worthy monument to a great achievement,—but perhaps also as a symbol of that potentiality,—the public which seeks—demands—enlightenment before arriving at a decision, and which will support any worthy undertaking when fostered by intelligent and disinterested leadership.

At its Fifty-sixth Annual Convention in Washington, 16 May, 1923, the American Institute of Architects adopted the following:

Whereas, by Resolution in National Convention in the years 1921 and 1922, the American Institute of Architects endorsed the action of the Chicago Chapter, A. I. A., in its efforts to restore the Fine Arts Building in Jackson Park, Chicago, and

Whereas, through continuous action and publicity on the part of the Chicago Chapter since 1920, and with the generous financial assistance of the Second Congressional District Illinois Federation of Women's Clubs one corner of the building has been restored, and

Whereas, in consequence thereof, and with the assistance of Civic organizations, prominent clubs and the public press, the South Park Commissioners, public custodians of the building, have agreed to restore the entire structure,

Therefore, be it resolved, as evidence of continued interest, that the Institute in National convention assembled, reaffirms its original resolution favoring the complete restoration and subsequent use of this building as a National Art Memorial and further recommends the establishment in this building of a University of Industrial Arts.

Arousing Public Interest in Architecture

The Work of the Southern California Chapter

The many kind words of appreciation and commendation received by the Southern California Chapter, because of its last Year Book, have been very gratifying and have made the time and energy spent well worth while. The financing was very simple; before starting upon the Year Book, exhibition and Honor Awards, an account of which appeared in the JOURNAL for March, 1923, last, the probable cost of these undertakings was estimated and it was determined that this entire expense could be met from sales of the Year Book. Estimates of the cost of the publication, based upon a dummy prepared by us, gave us approximate costs for an edition of 500 copies. The membership of the Chapter and the Architectural Club was then gone over and a quota prepared of the number of copies that we thought each member should be able to buy at the cost price. To this quota was added a sufficient number of copies to send one to each of the officers of the Institute, to each Chapter of the Institute, to each of the Honoraries of our Chapter and to each of the newspapers and magazines of Southern California. This quota accounted for 300 copies, leaving a balance of 200 copies which it was estimated could be sold to the general public at $5.00 per copy.

This showed our assumed possible income from the sale of the book. To raise the necessary balance we determined to charge each man whose work was illustrated in the Year Book with the approximate cost of the cuts, which would become his property after publication.

We then prepared subscription blanks, put fifteen solicitors in the field and made a two-day campaign to sell the quota allotted to the members, with instructions to the solicitors to accept no subscriptions unless accompanied by money. The campaign sold the quota; the members signed the agreement to pay for the cuts if the book was published, and the Allied Architects Association agreed to underwrite the sale of the books to the public. We were then ready to go ahead and authorize all three undertakings.

The exhibition story can be made very brief: We asked for submission of photographs and drawings in the usual way, the exhibitor signing an agreement to pay for any framing that the Hanging Committee should see fit to order for the work selected from his submissions. Just a few less than one thousand submissions were made to the Hanging Committee and six hundred and sixty exhibits were finally hung; seventy-five frames were ordered and this framing bill of $200.00 was met as per agreement by the individual architects whose work was framed by the Committee.

Two thousand copies of the catalogue of the exhibition were printed, and as the exhibit was hung without titles and by number only, it was quite essential for the public to buy these catalogues in order to understand the exhibit. These were sold at the Exhibit at 15c each and receipts from their sale more than covered the cost of printing.

The exhibition was very successful and was held in our one public Art Gallery, over 50,000 people viewing the exhibit in the twenty-eight days in which it was hung.

The Honor Awards story is just about as short: It was determined that Architects had been feeding themselves medals for so long that the public was no longer interested in that kind of mutual hand-outs; therefore it was determined that the Owner of the property who permitted the Architect to create the design, and the Contractors who executed the design, should receive the recognition that was due them, and this should be evidenced by a Certificate of the Chapter. The program of the Awards was fixed to limit the awards to buildings completed since the making of prior awards, thereby leaving the way open to make these Awards an annual or bi-annual affair as might be found advisable; the Awards to the Contractors were limited to those contractors whose work had contributed to the decorative or artistic elements of the design, thereby eliminating considerable embarrassment as to number of Awards on any one building.

A Jury from San Francisco made the Awards in the various classes and the Certificates were given at the annual dinner of the Chapter where all the recipients of the Awards were the guests of the Chapter. A splendid meeting resulted inasmuch as there were fifty-seven of these Awards made this year.

It has been very interesting to note the public appreciation of these Awards; they are being used very considerably in public advertisements, the Certificates being reproduced in most cases.

The material for the Year Book was selected before the Exhibition was hung by a sub-committee of the Hanging Committee and a total of one hundred and ten cuts of all sizes was finally determined upon. The printers rushed the book so that copies were placed on sale to the public the last two weeks of the exhibition. Those allotted to the public have practically all been taken up; indeed, we were able to make the sales direct to the public rather than through the book-sellers who were anxious to have them. Except for a few copies which we are holding for future distribution, the entire edition is sold; all bills were paid within two weeks of the issuance of the book and the Allied Architects Association was not called upon for its underwriting.

EDWIN BERGSTROM.

NOTE: In publishing the list of Honor Awards of the Southern California Chapter in the JOURNAL for March, 1923, the award of "Distinguished Merit in Architecture," to Robert D. Farquhar, for the Mausoleum for W. A. Clark, Jr., in Hollywood Cemetery, was inadvertently omitted from the list. The omission is greatly regretted and we hasten to make due amends.—EDITOR.

Letters to the Editor

The Lighting of Art Museums

SIR:

Mr. Cret's discussion of Seager's Paper on the lighting of art museums in your May issue misses one fundamental error in Seager's method. The diagrams given by Seager convey no correct idea as to the actual distribution of light through the skylight apertures. In fact, they are very misleading.

The amount of light received from a luminous surface, such as the sky, at any point depends on two factors; first, on the *solid angle* subtended at the point by the luminous surface, and second, on the quantity of light emitted by, or diffusely reflected from the surface per element of area—in other words, upon the *brightness* of the luminous surface.

To put this in simpler language, let us say, that the amount of light received at any point in a room depends on the amount of luminous surface and the brightness of the surface that can be seen from the point.

Take the case shown in Figure 1. Obviously the largest amount of sky surface can be seen from a point P_1, at the center of the floor. Therefore more light will be received here than at any other place in the room. The walls as at

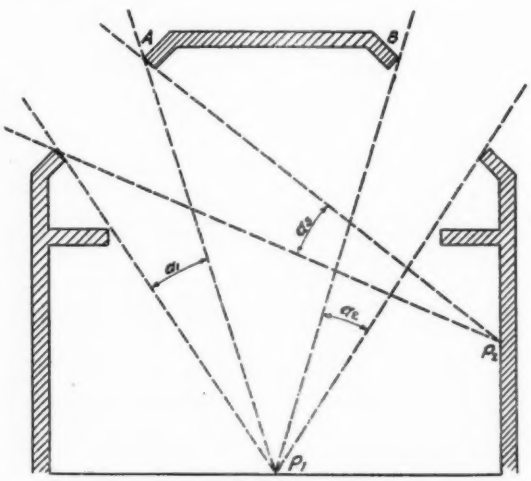

FIGURE 1

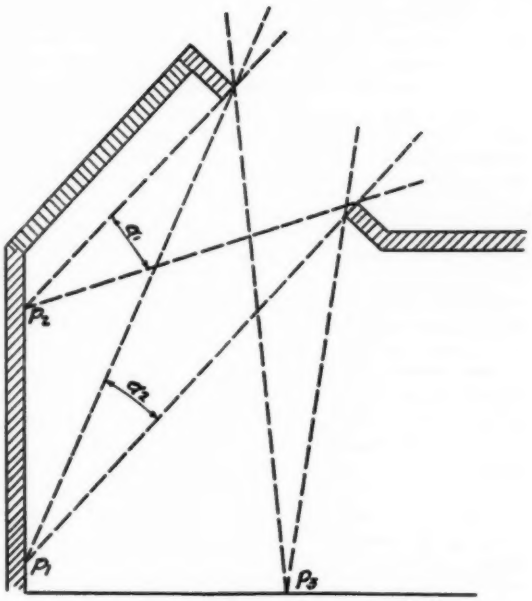

FIGURE 2

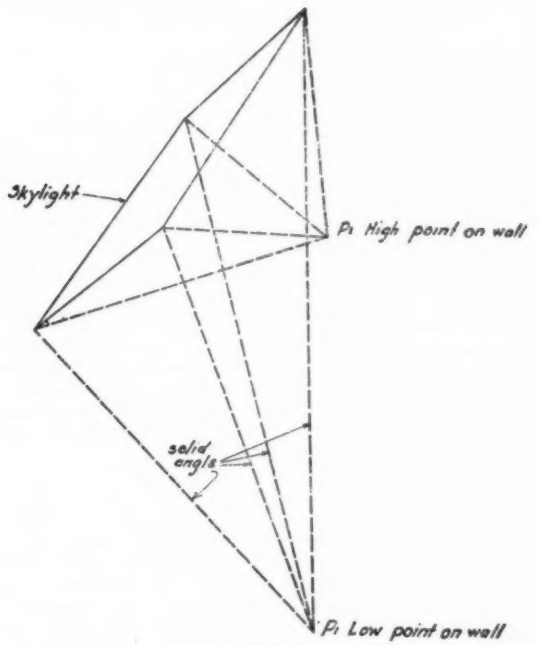

FIGURE 3

P_2, will receive considerably less light than the floor. Note that the solid roof area A-B has the effect of darkening the walls.

With the skylight arrangement shown in Figure 2, the floor, at P_3, will receive some direct light, but the walls will be unevenly illuminated, the amount received near the ceiling, at P_2, being in excess of that received near the floor at P_1. To approach equality of light distribution on the walls, the plane of the skylight must be nearer the horizontal, but this will increase the light on the floor.

In Figure 3, corresponding to Figure 2, the solid angles are shown in isometric projection. Note that the solid angle subtended by the skylight at the Point P_2 on the wall near the ceiling is much larger than the solid angle subtended at the point, P_1 near the floor. The magnitude of the difference between the light received at P_1 and P_2 is not given by Figure 2, which shows only sections of the solid angles. It is easy to draw out the solid angles for any case by the use of a planispherical diagram tracing applied directly to the plans and elevations or sections.

The sort of glass used to glaze the skylights or inner ceiling sashes has an important bearing on the results. The sky may be considered as a luminous surface showing diffuse brightness. Therefore any treatment of the glass that results in light diffusion will have little or no effect on the result. Direct sunlight is a different matter.

In general, clear plate glass in the skylights will give the best results, as a maximum amount of light will be transmitted. The ordinary fire polished plate is quite satisfactory. Temporary diffusers such as shades or adjustable louvres will then be used to break up direct sunlight. Great care must be exercised in the selection and glazing of ribbed or regularly figured glass if used. Such a glass, having prism shaped ribs frequently has been glazed with the ribs in or down. Used in this way this glass acts as an excellent reflector, keeping the light out of the building. A sample of ribbed glass having 90 deg. prisms transmitted twice as much light in one direction as in the other.

If a figured glass is necessary, for use in inner ceiling sashes, the so-called "granite" is the best, outside of an Austrian glass in which the figuring consists of small regular projections whose section is that of a sine wave. The probable appearance of the glass when installed should always be judged from the distance it will actually be seen, and not from a sample held in the hand. A figured glass that may seem eminently desirable from the viewpoint of looks, may prove to have low transmission or to produce a bad light distribution or both. Ground or etched glass, or opal glass of any kind should never be used.

One more remark: The first cost of skylights is high. It is necessary to heat them in winter and to cool them in summer. Both radiation and ventilation are required; the one to melt snow, counteract down draughts, and compensate for air leakage and heat losses; the other to keep the gallery from becoming a hot-house and to eliminate condensation.

The annual charges and operating costs of the skylights and the necessary added equipment are so high, that false skylights with suitable artificial lighting through such false skylights will be less expensive. In most cases the alternate is much less expensive. Furthermore, artificial light can be obtained of fixed distribution, intensity and color at all times, both by day and by night. None of these attributes of daylight are even approximately fixed, and are daily as well as seasonable variants.

The first cost of adjustable louvres sometimes used in an attempt to correct the variable intensity and distribution of daylight, if the louvres are of suitable character, is equal to, if not higher than, the first cost of a suitable artificial lighting equipment. Furthermore an artificial lighting equipment has to be installed in any case. Usually it is both inadequate and of bad design.

BASSETT JONES.

New York City.

Aspects of Architecture: Form and Substance

Sir: The vituperation of a disgruntled competitor in a recent competition stirs a query. Among the four competitors there were two groups, the conservative, traditional group of literary attainments, steeped in afternoon tea and the tradition of a direct heritage; and the Beaux Arts group of notorious ill repute. It so happened that one competitor of each group produced something utterly banal as far as character was concerned. The remaining conservative, true to tradition, did a hotchpotch of unassimilated wren. The second competitor of the Beaux Arts group produced an exquisite symmetrical composition of perfect unity—and won. It lacked any Gallic flavor and could therefore not be attacked on the score of "taste." "Practicability," next to "taste," is a cry to attract an architectural mob, so the defeated competitor complained that the award was unjust because his heating apparatus in the basement was housed more adequately, and he probably could have produced a polished diatribe, irrefutable in words (I, for one, always succumb to his English), but he was magnanimous and refrained.

But is it right to award a competition to a beautiful design that lacks the called-for excavation? Or is it art to cut out a figure by Sir Joshua Reynolds, another by Gainsborough and perhaps a third by Romney, put them on the same canvas and say "Behold my masterpiece"? Or what is architecture anyway, utility decked with ornament or an art restricted, a wall containing arid space or a wonderful city within the wall opened only to those with the magic password "composition," a city of ecstatic and veiled mystery? Facts! Facts! How united and confident the ignorant! How distraught and uncertain—the initiated, groping in the treacherous unknown of magic combinations, never knowing the exact measure of their attainment or that of others but in the vague and fickle terms of sympathetic appreciation.

NOSNIBOR N. KNARF.

Boston, Massachusetts.

City and Regional Planning

The New School, 465 West 23rd Street, New York City, announces a Course of Study in City and Regional Planning under the direction of Professor Patrick Geddes, 25 June to 4 August. Requests for catalogue and information should be addressed to the school as above.

Form in Civilization[1]

"The intellectual system of most of us in these days needs to purge and to live cleanly," said the late Frederic Harrison.

This rugged statement, if accepted, voices our need of such a book as this one of Lethaby's. Let me suggest to the potential reader of "Form in Civilization" that he attempt not to read it in one evening. He may do so, indeed, for it is a tiny book, and the mere mechanical process of reading it will not take long. If, however, he begins it with his faculties of open-mindedness and appreciation as guides, he will be constrained to stop and think after almost every paragraph. He will react upon its "pithy sentences" as his experience and habits of thought prompt him, but react he must. Blessed be he if he is young, and untrammeled by any hardening of his mental and spiritual arteries.

Here is no pretentious treatise of philosophy, nor any elaborate system of argument. We are given a sense of intimacy with a man who flatters us by his assumption that we are interested in what interests him, and who charms us by the confiding way in which he gives us his sometimes startling conclusions.

The twenty-two short chapters which the book contains are papers reprinted from well-known English papers, and are also addressed to various bodies such as the Arts and Crafts Society, the Design and Industry Association, the Royal Institute of British Architects, and the Architectural Association. They date from 1896 to the present and may fairly represent the author's best thought for a period of over thirty years of sustained interest in and eager pursuit of truth. Nor is any of it old or in any way obsolete. What he said about the English trades-unions in 1896 may be said with perfect accuracy of our American trades-unions today.

To attempt to present the author's point of view in a compact statement would be ungracious, and might serve as an excuse for someone to pass on to other things. The book should be read by every architect and draftsman in this country, especially the younger men. It should also be read by those who follow the Arts and Crafts, whether "Fine" or "Applied." Scarcely a page but contains a sentence or a paragraph which is self-contained, finely constructed and provocatively quotable. Our habits of thought are almost rudely bumped, and yet the author is not insulting to our pride. He is too impersonal for that. He is not blaming us for our fallen-away condition, nor does he much more than hint at the cure for it. He does, however, diagnose a condition which is becoming more and more acute, and which most of us dislike to admit exists and refuse to think or talk about except with irritation.

A fascinating anthology of definitions could be compiled from this little collection of essays:

ARCHITECTURE

"It is human skill and feeling shown in the great necessary activity of building."

"Properly understood, it not only concerns the man in the street, it comes home to all householders and households."

"It is current speech, it is not an art of classical quotation."

"Architecture, in fact, is only building 'writ large.'"

"Architecture or building, so far as at any given moment it deals with known traditional needs, should be customary; so far as it has to meet changing conditions and ideals it must be experimental."

"Architecture, properly understood, is largely civilization itself."

"More and more we become the victims of our words and live frightened by names. Such a name is Architecture. In its mystery vague and vain pretenses may be shrouded, in its shadows may hide many minor superstitions about correct design, the right style, the true proportion. High priests arise who are supposed to know subtle doctrines and can point the way to æsthetic safety."

[1] Collected Papers on Art and Labour by W. R. Lethaby.

"The mystification about 'architecture' has isolated the intimate building art from the common interest and understanding of ordinary men. To talk with a believing architect on his theories is almost as hopeless as to chaff a cardinal."

"Any mastership in architecture depends on its universality and its service. It is only chief in the sense that he who serves is the greatest."

"The essence of all the old arts was in their vitality, their response to the natural conditions and the psychology of their times."

"Any strong and general interest in building felt by a people will produce a living school of art. There is no one perfect school, there is an infinitude of conceivable perfections."

"We think in words, and we talk of architecture and fine designs and art and style and so on, but we do not seem to notice with our eyes how little of these things we get in the real streets of the real towns we know."

"No architect has any more right to put up an insulting building than to stand on the pavement and make faces at us."

"Is *this* good architecture? few of us would agree.

"Is *this* a good building? we should nearly all agree."

Art

"By thinking of art as a special matter dealt with by special people called architects and painters and musicians, we have gone far to banish beauty from our towns and from our lives. What I mean by art, then, is not the affair of a few, but of everybody."

"The need for public art, not as a superabundance of luxury, but as an absolutely necessary part of the ordinary life of people in communities, has really become for us a very pressing question."

"Art, in the common view of it, has been narrowed into a matter of pictures, especially 'oil paintings,' which are brought together in annual exhibitions, and explained, or at least written about, by people called 'art critics.' The once flowing stream of music in a similar way has been turned into the dry bed of concert-halls, where it is tasted by other sets of critics. The arts are thus thought of as specimens you occasionally see in galleries for a shilling; they have ceased to be a daily inspiration for life."

"This art, about which such elevated yet confusing things may be said when it is considered at its remoter end as genius, emotion, and poetry, at its nearer end is just good workmanship, quality, skill, fitness, rightness in all things done and made."

"Poetry and art come from insight into the essentials of things and life."

"Science is what you know; art is what you do."

"Art is high competence in doing what is worthy to be done."

"Art is the active side of things, science the contemplative."

"It is the business of art to use the materials given to us by Nature so that they will look well; and when they are well used they will look well."

"We are not ready to produce works of art consciously poetic—wherefore again let us do things obviously useful for life's sake."

"The most of art is science in operation, and a large part of science is reflection upon art. Properly, only science can be taught, for you cannot teach beyond knowledge, and every fresh activity is a sort of creation. This is art—the works whereby we show our science. It is our false idea that art is a sort of ghost which frightens us off true work."

"It is as silly and dangerous to set up a theory of enjoyment in art without inquiring as to where it will lead, as to set up a science of the delights of drugs and drams."

"First the experts split off 'art' from work and utility, and then they split off 'fine art' from commoner stuff, and then they are ready for æsthetics, by isolating their emotions of delight. Even the first step, the isolation from work of an element called art, is fatal to both work and art—it is isolating life from the body."

"Art is many things—service, record and stimulus; it is not only a question of genius; without the basis of common art you cannot have the apex of genius. This common art, which is the thing of importance—as freer arts will be formed out of it—is concerned with all the ordinary things of life."

"Modern writers try to separate the emotional aspects from the bases which are their necessary support, but in its history the word Art has meant Workmanship."

"Writers on æsthetics have not sufficiently recognized that Art is *service* before it is delight; it is *labour* as well as emotion; it is *substance* as well as expression."

"Art, it seems to me, is right activity and work, especially complete and noble workmanship."

"Art is not only high imagination and invention, it is also skilled workmanship and patient record. It is 'design,' but it is also imitation. All art is labour as well as thought."

"Art is best conceived as beneficent labour which blesses both him who gives and him who receives."

"Art philosophies are very largely conditioned by economics. 'Cubism' and End-of-the-Worldism are almost mechanically simple reactions from mechanism."

"If good art is a form of pleasant human speech, great art is teaching and worship."

"All art is the wisdom of men's hands."

"Artists wish to give; they want to be allowed to work."

"Artists have the proved distinction of making things, and doing something with their hands."

"Art should be peaceable, modest, helpful, health-giving."

"We seem to have isolated our art until most people seem to think in the equation: Art = Oil paintings by a real R. A."

"Art is the element of good quality in all production."

"Most simply and generally art may be thought of as the well-doing of what needs doing."

"Art is humanity put into workmanship."

"Art is thoughtful workmanship."

"Art, then, I choose to believe, is sound and complete human workmanship."

"Reverence for labour is the basis of art, for art is the labour which is fully worthy of reverence."

"Art in the life of the worker can only spring from hope and joy."

BEAUTY

"The idea of beauty, daily-bread beauty, not style pretense, must be brought back into our life."

"Beauty is the evidence of Vitality—the smile of health."

"Beauty, like breathing, is solved by doing it, not by this everlasting argument."

"Beauty is a necessary function of fitness; beauty is the smile of health, and it is one of the few great things which sustain the spirit of communities."

"Beauty is the substance of things done, as faith is the substance of things hoped for."

"We have heaps of teachers, philosophers, politicians and economists, but none that I hear of seems to understand that no nation can last without beauty."

"Beauty in art is the evidence of high humanity in work."

These are just samples and I submit them in the hope that the reader will want more. It is a hopeful sign that in our literature, which today seems so deeply colored with pessimism, there are men like Lethaby, whose high hope and optimism may not be doubted, who are not afraid to tell the truth about our petty vanities, though it may be offensive to our pride. We should welcome philosophical excursions of this sort in the hope that they may lead us still deeper into the heart of things. It may be that original sin and its companions and followers in evil have seduced humanity, in general, away from the simple and natural expression which we recognize as the various art-forms, and then again it may be something else. The economic basis of human affairs is not all material. It has its spiritual significance and its effect on minds and hearts. A friend of mine, who read this book, said: "He does not see deep enough. Men and women, if they are economically free, will turn to beauty as naturally as the little child does to candy."

The criticism is probably just, but let us be thankful if this book will do no more than help in the difficult matter of "clear thinking and plain speaking." W. L. S.

Henry Bacon

Institute Gold Medalist—1923

Henry Bacon was born at Watseka, Illinois, 28 November, 1866. He matriculated at the University of Illinois in 1884, but left before graduation to enter the office of Chamberlin & Whidden in Boston. In 1886 Mr. Bacon came to New York and entered the office of McKim, Mead & White. In 1889 Mr. Bacon won the Rotch Traveling Scholarship and went abroad for two years, studying in France, Italy and Greece, returning to the office of McKim, Mead & White in 1891.

In 1892 Mr. Bacon went to Chicago and worked for nine months on the World's Fair.

Leaving McKim, Mead & White in 1897, a partnership was formed with J. Brite. Five years later it was dissolved, since when Mr. Bacon has practised alone, serving as consulting architect to the Public Service Commission, as a member of the Municipal Art Commission and the Commission of Fine Arts, Washington, D. C.

Some of the buildings designed by Henry Bacon are:

Public Library, Paterson, N. J.; Memorial Day Nursery, Paterson, N. J.; Halle Bros.' Department Store, Cleveland, Ohio; Railroad Station, Naugatuck, Conn.; Waterbury General Hospital, Waterbury, Conn.; Memorial Bridge, Naugatuck, Conn.; Union Square Savings Bank, New York, N. Y.; Chelsea Savings Bank, Chelsea, Mass.; National City Bank, New Rochelle, N. Y.; Citizens & Manufacturers National Bank, Waterbury, Conn.; Court of the Four Seasons, Panama-Pacific Exposition, San Francisco; Electric Society Building, Middletown, Conn.; Astronomical Observatory, Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn.; Dormitory, Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn.; General layout of future extension, Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn.; University of Virginia Gates, Charlottesville, Va.; First Congregational Church alterations, Providence, R. I.; Woodmere High School, Woodmere, New York; Public Bath, Brooklyn, New York.

Mr. Bacon has collaborated with Daniel C. French in the design and erection of over fifty monuments, of which the principal ones are: Parkman Monument, Jamaica Plain, Mass.; Melvin Monument, Concord, Mass.; Oglethorpe Monument, Savannah, Ga.; Marshall Field Monument, Chicago, Illinois; Spencer Monument, Atlanta, Ga.; Lincoln Monument Lincoln, Nebraska; Draper Monument, Milford, Mass.; Longfellow Monument, Cambridge, Mass.; Spencer Trask Memorial, Saratoga Springs, N. Y.; Lafayette Monument, Brooklyn, N. Y.; Republic Monument, Chicago, Illinois; DuPont Fountain, Washington, D. C.

He is now engaged with Mr. French in the design of a War Memorial to be erected by the State of Massachusetts at St. Mihiel, France.

Mr. Bacon collaborated with Augustus Saint-Gaudens in the Parnell Monument, Dublin, Ireland; Hanna Monument, Cleveland, Ohio; Whistler Monument, West Point, New York; Magee Memorial, Pittsburgh, Penn.; Governor Flower Memorial, Watertown, New York.

The Mark A. Hanna and Garret Hobart Mausoleums were designed by Mr. Bacon.

Mr. Bacon has received the Award of Merit on design at World's Fair, Chicago; a gold medal for design of the Lincoln Memorial by the Panama-Pacific Exposition, San Francisco, 1915; and in 1918 the New York Chapter's Medal of Honor "in recognition of his distinguished contributions to Monumental Architecture and of his high professional standing."

Found

Will the delegate who reported the loss of a gold Eversharp pencil at the Convention in Washington be kind enough to communicate with the Executive Secretary at the Octagon House, as the pencil has been found?

Convention Notes

The Fifty-sixth Convention was one more step in the right direction. The tedium and monotony of perfunctoriness and palaver was reduced,—not to the hoped-for irreducible minimum, but in a large measure nevertheless,—and the culminating ceremony was so beautiful as to wring forgiveness from the stoniest-hearted delegate who sat through the complained of hours of talk in the Hemicycle.

Mr. Cunningham has elected to treat the affair in his own manner and no editorial blue pencil has intruded upon his manuscript. Let us hope that his observations will record another step also in the progress of the JOURNAL, which exists to support nobody's opinions but as a free vehicle for whatever any member of the Institute has to say.

The officers and directors elected for the ensuing year are as follows:

WILLIAM B. FAVILLE, San Francisco, *President;* N. MAX DUNNING, Chicago, *First Vice-President;* WILLIAM STANLEY PARKER, Boston, *Second Vice-President;* EDWIN H. BROWN, Minneapolis, *Secretary;* D. EVERETT WAID, New York City, *Treasurer;* C. C. ZANTZINGER, Philadelphia, *Director, Third District;* C. HERRICK HAMMOND, Chicago, *Director, Fifth District;* WILLIAM E. FISHER, Denver, *Director, Eighth District.*

GORHAM PHILLIPS STEVENS, Director of the Academy of Rome, was elected to *Honorary Corresponding Membership.*

Several notable addresses were delivered at the afternoon and evening sessions of the Convention. Mr. Cunningham alludes to them in his story and certainly the proceedings this year will be of some interest. The addresses were freely given out to the press and all of them will no doubt appear in other architectural periodicals.

What the convention has not yet succeeded in lies in the domain of discussion. There are present at every one of these annual gatherings men who have lived through years of American architectural practice, who have accumulated a rich fund of experience, who have ideas and opinions and facts to offer, and who could, if properly induced, contribute a running debate on informal lines such as would be rich in interest and value. What little genuine expression now finds an outlet is generally confined to the dry-as-dust topics of Institute routine and business. On the art of architecture, we get lectures, but we do not ourselves discuss it. An occasional wit makes itself apparent and lightens the heavy gloom of reports and this Convention was remarkable as showing how greatly the Business End of things can be compressed. Why cannot the Board's report cover the entire gamut and thus make another great gain of precious time, and why cannot the delegates continue to give a greater confidence to the Board's management of affairs and to trust it and hold it responsible in all matters which do not require constitutional action? Then we shall be getting somewhere indeed.

Plans for the alteration of the Octagon Property were again before the Convention. We hope to publish them in our next issue. They call for a new building on the upper end of the plot, along the alley between New York Avenue and G Street, and seem to indicate a very admirable disposition of the space. The Convention passed the resolution which brings the subject of a mortgage on the property, the proceeds to be used in financing the new building, before the next Convention for action, as required under the Constitution.

Previous to the Convention the Board of Directors authorized the acceptance of the proposal that the Institute become, through its Press, the distributing agent in the United States for the Memorial Volume on Sir Christopher Wren, issued in coincidence with the recent bi-centenary observance of his death. The proceeds of the volume are to be devoted to the preservation of St. Paul's Cathedral in London.

A resolution felicitating the Society of Architects, London, on the foundation of its American Traveling Scholarship in Architecture, was unanimously passed, as was the resolution which so heartily indorses and supports the Chicago Chapter in its work of restoring the Fine Arts Building in Chicago. The text of the latter appears elsewhere in this issue in an article by Mr. George W. Maher.

The Executive Committee of the Board of Directors for the ensuing year is as follows: Messrs. Faville, Brown, Waid, Dunning, and Steele. Announcements of other committees will very soon be made. The Executive Secretary is at work on the new Annuary and Proceedings and those Delegates who receive records of their addresses for correction are urged immediately to return them to the Octagon, while members receiving appointments to Committees are likewise asked to give them instant attention. A few delinquents can hold up the issuance of both the Proceedings and the Annuary to the great inconvenience of all concerned.

We repeat: The Proceedings of the Fifty-sixth Annual Convention will contain a number of notable addresses. These, read in their continuity, will be well worth while. They are not only of intrinsic value, but they mark an important stage in that turning-point which will eventually make a Convention of the American Institute of Architects something that no architect will wish to miss. The Fifty-sixth was the best one yet, but better can be done, so far as the sessions are concerned. As for the concluding ceremonial, one is not so sure. That set a mark which is likely to stand for some time,—and yet, who knows the resources of architects when they are put on their mettle and are free to let their imagination take form?

C. H. W.

The Editor's Note Book

In Washington, during the days immediately preceding the Convention, there were two topics of conversation that seldom failed to thrust themselves into the speech of those members of the Institute who were there to deal with the preparations for the annual gathering. One topic was the pageant—the other was the weather. As to the first, it was surprising to run across the pessimism and the doubtings of those who might generally be thought to possess the gift of imagination to an acute degree.

Yet to some few the pageant seemed to loom as only a large and dreadful shadow across the horizon of the Convention, the profession, and the whole field of architecture generally, and to be such a source of misgiving that one began to wonder. Might it be possible that all architects are not the imaginative people they are thought to be? How could any architect be frightened at the thought of a pageant? Or was the fear no more than an expression of the inevitable pessimism that besets any really great undertaking? Fortunately the answer lay ready to hand, for one only had to come in contact with the tireless effort of Howard Greenley and Jimmy Hewlett and Irwin Porter, to become aware of the fact that there are differences even among architects. Some have imagination and some are as dull and dreary as an old-fashioned prayer meeting. But Greenley and Hewlett and Porter had the imagination and the energy and the ability to organize and direct and assemble and group and plan,—in other words to conceive and put through a really great architectural achievement.

As for the weather, it is true that we were all afraid of the rain. It seemed to be the one element upon which we could not reckon and which we could not organize and direct and control. During the days of feverish preparation it did rain, and the sky was lowering and gloomy. Yet we accepted these conditions not as portents but as harbingers. If it rained every day preceding the pageant, then the chances were that it would not rain on the one evening of all. As a matter of fact, our calculations were wrong, and yet perhaps we all learned something that was really worth while, and to which I am presently coming.

Under ordinary circumstances, one would have been satisfied to close the Convention with the dinner in the huge marquee at the end of the reflecting pool. We remembered the beauty of the dinner at Chicago last year—under the dome of the Fine Arts Building at Jackson Park, with the light playing wonderful games of hide and seek in the shadows above and dancing on the lagoon outside,—and yet here again, we sat beside another stretch of water and were once more transported to fairy isles and other games of light and shadow, and listened to music and the fine words of Mr. Cortissoz. It seemed natural and in tune, as though the Institute had at last begun to take the measure of things and thus come to a certain sense of dignity and repose.

No doubt the procession from the marquee to the Memorial seemed a little long and solemn to some, yet I thought it inspiring, and as it should have been. A pageant cannot be hurried. It does not burst like a rocket to the huzzahs of the mob. It has to proceed its own measured pace, unruffled and in the slow movement of a growing grandeur. The great barge gave the key, as it was drawn the length of the pool, and the slow lighting up of the Memorial was the silent antiphonal chant that gave the response. Further than that, no words of mine will carry. When the groups were finally assembled and the lights were at full, the spectacle passed beyond my descriptive powers. It was a Venetian carnival,—it was a Roman Emperor holding court and receiving his vassal subjects,—it was a Grecian play,—it was a medieval pageant before the king after the tourney,—it was a ceremonial of the old Indian guildsmen, they who as architects were the keepers of the records which they built into temples, and before one of which they had drawn together all the splendors of that East which passeth Western understanding, all the panoply of purple and gold and fine handiwork of that East which will still live when the West has gone,—it was everything that the consummate artistry of Howard Greenley and Jimmy Hewlett could produce, and it will remain an unforgettable spot of color and design in the minds of all who saw it.

Surely none could have gone unmoved as the strains of Walter's Prize Song heralded the event of the night,—the bestowal of the Gold Medal on Henry Bacon, and surely there were none who ever saw an architectural honor so beautified by the resources of architecture. I wondered, as I stood transfixed, what were the feelings of the gentleman from Boston who had said to me, on the edge of the evening, that he had "stayed over for the pageant through a sense of duty,"— by which it is not to be inferred that all the unimaginative architects came from Boston.

And in spite of all our hopes and fears the sky was shrouded in dark clouds and the rain fell. Yet what a marvellous touch was thereby added. No light in the sky competed with the lighting of the Memorial and the groups of costumed figures and the gay banners of the Chapters,—the wonderful gay banners without which the thing could not have been done. The silence was magnificently impressive. The splendid note set by the barge and the procession grew ever more splendid up to the very culmination. The inner lighting of the Memorial itself, as well as the soft luminosity in which its outer walls were clothed, gave that exquisite pleasure that borders so closely on the realm of pain. The picture was too perfect to remain—except as a shrine in the memory of those who were fortunate enough to see it.

Then, after the Presidential party had departed there was a final waving movement of the banners on the steps. Again the colors took new lights and sent forth their kaleidoscopic fanfare to announce the close of the ceremony. As for the rain, it fell gently and like a benediction. And everyone knew it to be one, for even the doubters and the killjoys had come under the inspiring influence of the art they profess to practice,—they had known the spell, in spite of their very unknowing selves, of the art of architectural pageantry when practised by architects who are great artists.

Hats off, gentlemen, and a deep obeisance; and for me, at least, a great and fervent gratitude.

C. H. W.

Structural Service Department appears on the second right hand page following

A Newly Discovered Statue of Christ
(See Page 282)